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TRUTH WITHOUT CONTROVERSY:

A SERIES OF

Doctrinal Lectures,

INTENDED PRINCIPALLY

FOR YOUNG PROFESSORS

OF

RELIGION.

BY R. SMITH, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BALLSTON, N. Y.

SARATOGA SPRINGS:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY G. M. DAVISON.

1824.

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Northern District of New-York, to wit :

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the thirteenth day of February, in the forty-eighth year of the In-
(L. S.) dependence of the United States of America, A. D. 1824, G. M. Davison, of the said District, has deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit :

" Truth without Controversy : a series of Doctrinal Lectures, intended principally for Young Professors of Religion. By R. Smith, A. M. Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Ballston, N. Y."

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RICHARD R. LANSING,
Clerk of the Northern District of New-York.

PREFACE.

Soon after the great revival, with which it pleased God to visit this region in 1820, a venerable father in the ministry made me the following remark: 'You also, I understand, have had a great gathering; and now, my young friend, if, in your whole life, you shall be the means of building up and establishing in the faith those whom God has given you, you will have done a great service.'

I have thought much of this remark. Without ceasing to labour for new revivals, the pastor who has been blessed with the gathering of numerous hopeful converts at one season, ought never to imagine he labours in vain, while those converts remain to be instructed and sanctified; and where, as in most instances, they consist principally of young people, the difficulty, as well as the desireableness of establishing them in the faith, will daily enlarge his views of the importance of this labour.

We early turned our attention, therefore, to the claims of our numerous young professors; but difficulties occurred in adopting a mode of instruction, suitable to their condition. In a country congregation, Bible classes cannot be maintained more than

a few months in the year ; and for that portion, who were able to attend, we found the want of a suitable help to the study of the sacred oracles.

M'Dowel's Questions were evidently intended for children rather than young professors ; and it is no disparagement to the excellency of most of our books of doctrinal instruction to say, that neither their size or style of teaching controverted truths, do very much recommend them to young professors of religion.

We have commonly conducted our Bible classes, therefore, simply with the use of the sacred volume —drawing out and establishing such doctrines and duties as the lessons seemed fairly to teach, in our own language ; and this has led, eventually, to a course of lectures on the same subjects, and with the same object.

At first it was only expected that the pupils would take notes of the leading proofs and arguments, with a view to rehearsing them in our classes : the repeated request of this part of my charge, at length induced me to consent that the lectures should be put into a printed form ; and subsequently to the issuing of the first proposals, they were enlarged, at the suggestion of an intelligent friend, to their present number and dimensions.

The style of these discourses is more formal than it would have been, had not the writer been anxious

to supply a useful reference to scripture on essential points of doctrine ; and sensible, at the same time, that, though firmly believing what is asserted, he *might* be mistaken, he would therefore speak with caution.

He could never satisfy himself, moreover, that the mere discussion of a doctrine, however important, could answer all the objects of preaching ; and the lectures have, in consequence, closed more or less in the style of exhortation.

But the feature most aimed at in the forming of these discourses, has been simply the *affirmative method of argument*. This plan was attended with difficulties ; but it has been pursued, both from the conviction that many, not belonging to us in denomination, ought not to be wounded in their feelings, by a zeal for non-essential points of difference ; and that, were our object what it is not, to win a dissenting brother, there is the least of all encouragement in assailing him with controversy.

Truth is self-balanced ; and the world need not, every day, be told what is opposed to it.

It is believed, therefore, nothing will be found in these discourses to offend any denomination of evangelical christians ; and should they be read by any whose essential difference of views do not assign them to this class, the affirmative plan of our argument will still leave that assignment to themselves.

If the writer knows any thing of his own heart, he has but one object in suffering these lectures to be published : it is to promote, if possible, the better doctrinal instruction of the rising generation ; and especially of those whom he hopes he may regard in the endearing relation of spiritual children.

THE AUTHOR.

Ballston, Sept. 26, 1823.

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LECTURE I.

THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE.

II PETER I. 19.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well, that ye take heed, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.

I have intended, for some time, to attempt a course of lectures, comprising the outlines of the principal doctrines in theology. I am aware, that even among an enlightened and christianized people, it is often necessary to call the attention to these truths; and my wish has been, that my young people, especially, might enjoy the means of obtaining a regular and connected view of them. I have, therefore, particularly to invite their attention to these lectures. We shall spend a part of each sabbath, for some time, in these discussions, and endeavour to render them as plain and practicable as possible.

Let us commence, this morning, with the subject of INSPIRATION.

Much, we know, might be said on the sub-

ject of *Natural Religion*, and, in a course of systematick theology, that is usually first taken up. But we can dispense with the glimmering of stars, when we have the light of the sun; and if we can, to-day, prove that *the Bible is truly the inspired word of God*, we shall have laid an important foundation for all that is to follow.

The evidences of inspiration are commonly divided into two classes—*external* and *internal.*

I. *Of the* External Evidences. And here we shall mention, at present, only two—that of *Prophecy*, and that of *Miracles.*

1. *Of Prophecy.* A man, disposed to examine this subject, finds from history, that the book we call the Bible, has been in existence many thousand years; the New Testament nearly two thousand years, and the Old Testament much longer. But in this book, he finds certain prophecies, which purport to have been written before the events to which they allude; and they profess the truth on this subject. There can be no doubt, that there lived such a man as the prophet Isaiah, in the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, while some of the events which he prophecied, such as the birth of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles,

did not transpire until many hundred years afterwards. There can be still less doubt, that there lived such a personage as Jesus Christ, in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar of Rome; but many of the events which he predicted, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews, have since transpired, or are now passing before our eyes. These prophets spoke by the Spirit of God, then, and were true men. So much of testimony as they give to the inspiration of scripture, is, therefore, valid. But both of these prophets, as well as many others, have quoted the scriptures as true, and repeatedly called the whole of them *the word of God.* (See Isai. xl. 8, and John xvii. 17.)

2. *The proof of Miracles.* This Saviour, moreover, professed to work *miracles;* and the express object of these *miracles* was, to prove that his doctrine was true, and that he came from God. *The works that I do*, said he, *they testify of me.* If he were a wicked being, and wrought miracles by magick, he would not have wrought them to prove *such* doctrines; if he were an unassisted being, he could not have wrought them at all. But were miracles actually wrought? A large number of men, who wrote the history of these miracles, declare that they witnessed them. (See Acts ii. 32, and i Cor. xv. 6.)

So many witnesses, and to so great a variety of miracles, could hardly have been deceived; and that they would not willingly give false testimony to others, is sufficiently manifest, from the consideration of the circumstances in which they gave it. They were a poor, weak, and despised party; it was in favour of a new and unpopular religion they testified; they had nothing to gain in this world from their testimony; and yet they submitted to pain, and poverty, and contempt, and death itself, rather than yield the *fact* that these miracles had been witnessed by them. Nothing like this can be found in testimony of any other religion under heaven. Other men have wrote of miracles; but not of miracles which they had themselves seen. Other miracles have been said to be wrought, but they were always in favour of a religion already received, and popluar in the eyes of men; and other men have even died in testimony of supposed truth; but it was always for the testimony of *opinions*, that they died, but never, as in this case, in testimony of *facts*. The miracles of revelation do, therefore, incontestibly prove its truth.

II. *The second* class of evidences in favour of the inspiration of the scriptures, are called INTERNAL EVIDENCES. The examiner holds

this sacred volume in his hand, and he looks away now from all historical evidences, to see what proof the book contains in itself.—He will find,

1. *That it is free from all absurd, impure and puerile representations*, such as are unworthy of divine revelation. We have only to compare the Bible with a single chapter of the Koran, or any of those apocryphal books, which have attempted to imitate it, and we shall see that it came from a higher and a holier hand. Every where it is consistent, chaste, and altogether dignified.

2. *Its doctrines and representations*, are spiritual as well as pure, and they promote the happiness of those who recieve them. This proves that they did not come from a wicked being, and the superior degree in which they effect this happiness, above all other books, seems to refer them to a higher authority. *The law of the Lord*, said David, and experience has proved it to be true—*the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.* (Ps. xix.) In order to this,

3. *They teach a remarkable morality.* The ethics or moral principles of all other books are such, as are calculated to recommend them to men, either because they are necessary for present good, or in themselves a-

greeable to the propensities of our nature. The morality of the Bible is precisely different. Every where it inculcates self-denial, and refers the motives for duty, not so much to the present as a future world. Take the following specimens of this:—*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Avenge not yourselves; In honour prefering one another. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust.*

And it will mightily strengthen this part of our argument, if we look for a moment at the effect which this bible morality produces. Universally, where the Bible is received, the happiest consequences follow; and in no place, where it is not received. are men either civilized, free, or happy. The examiner might search from Greenland to the Cape of Good Hope, and trace the boundaries of every bright and happy spot, by the extent to which the Bible had been circulated; he might then run over the map of Turkey, internal Asia, the Islands of the sea, and every other region, not visited by this volume, and look there in vain for one substantial vestige of elevated, social, or religious morality. It is a remarkable fact, that there is not found in

all the writings of heathen antiquity, a single allusion to such a phenomenon as a radical change of moral character. Such a testimony in favour of the Bible, is invaluable.

4. *This volume gives a true and consistent account of the character of man.* Human nature is found to be corrupt, fickle and unfaithful, unjust, proud, and altogether selfish. Is it not remarkable, then, on any other supposition, than that the Bible is of God, that, many thousand years ago, we should have had such representations on this subject as the following? *The whole imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, continually.* (Gen. vi. 5.) *Trust ye not in any brother, for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.* (Jer. ix. 4.) *And men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.* (ii Tim. iii. 2, 3, 4.) Let any person read the 14th Psalm, or the 1st and 2d chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, and compare these descriptions with what he has learned of human nature by experience, and

let him say whether they are not true representations.

5. *These scriptures give a sublime and consistent account of many subjects which are not discussed elsewhere, or if discussed at all, it is evidently in a manner either imperfect or absurd.* Such is the account which they give of the character of God, of the origin of the world, and of the plan of redemption. We are not ignorant that *traces* of all these truths are to be found in other writings ; and it is a corroboration of our argument, that they are ; because these traces have undoubtedly been borrowed from revelation. But what is the consistency and dignity of these hints of heathen writers, when compared with the representations of the Bible ? The heathen character of God is that of a changeable, unjust, and impure tyrant. They imagined, among other things, that the world was hatched from an egg, and that men had their origin from the teeth of serpents. And, for the notion of redemption, they actually seemed to have retained none of it, further than in the symbol of sacrifices, which they have abused to every cruel and obscene enormity. Now, were we to compare with these, the sublime, consistent and clear revelations of scripture, on the same points, we should be prepared to believe

that these are the teachings of God ; and that the reason why other writers have not succeeded here, is because these subjects were confessedly above them.

6. *It is another remarkable proof of the divinity of the scriptures, that the writers seem entirely indifferent to the opinions of men.* They record their own faults as frequently, or more frequently, than the faults of others ; they never stop to explain apparent difficulties in their doctrines and representations, which other writers so often think it necessary to do ; and they give no ornament, no exaggerated description of the character of their heroes.

Jesus Christ is the hero of the New Testament ; but if you reflect, you will remember that there is scarce a verse directly descriptive of his character in the book, except in those instances where other writers are quoted, to show that he had been predicted. The writers of the New Testament do not indulge in description ; they simply tell you of the *acts and sayings* of Jesus Christ, and leave you to infer his character. These, I confess, have always appeared to me among the strongest proofs of the truth and honesty of these writers ; it looks so much like sincerity, like a consciousness of being right,

and of regarding a higher object than that of satisfying men, that it must have weight with every observing reader. They seem, in fact, to have entirely disregarded the opinions of men.

7. *The harmony of these writers*, is another proof. There is not a contradiction, or a counter sentiment or representation in the whole Bible. Not even a plausible representation can be made out to establish such a blemish ; for there are no appearances of such discrepancies, which cannot easily be, and have not been repeatedly reconciled. Now, in so great a number of books, this harmony is remarkable ; and it is the more remarkable, when we consider the great variety of writers, and compass of time, which have been occupied to furnish the Bible. About 30 different writers were its authors, and about 1800 years intervened from the commencement to the finishing of this book ; and yet this unbroken thread of harmony runs throughout the whole. Is this accountable on any other supposition, than that these men spoke as they were inspired of God ?

8. *Some of the expressions and conceptions of the Bible, seem, evidently, to be more than human.* Read Moses' description of God's appearance to the seventy Elders of Israel on

Mount Sinai: read Ezekiel's visions of the cherubim: read Isaiah's prophecy, and Habbakuk's prayer: read, especially, and ponder well, David's description of the descent of the Almighty in the 18th Psalm; and if you are not ready to acknowledge, that there is a sublimity, both of thought and expression, more than human in the scriptures, I am much mistaken. No; these are figures and illustrations which never sprang from human intellect alone; they came from above; they are the eloquence of heaven!

9. We might further mention, in proof of the authenticity of these scriptures, *that the accounts they incidentally give of the manners, customs, history, and geography of the countries, where they were written, are found to be true.* We cannot go into this subject; but you may receive the fact on authority; it is really so; and I have to recommend, my young friends, that if you ever meet with a book called *Harmer's Observations*, or another, on *Oriental Manners and Customs*, by the *Rev. George Burder*, you will give them a reading, for this purpose.

10. The concluding argument which I have to offer, for the inspiration of the scriptures, is, *that they tend to honour and glorify God.* Every book that has been written by man has some leading object, and, without

much difficulty, that object can usually be seen. The object and tendency of the Bible is to give honour and glory to God. It puts him at the head and origin of all things, and of this Bible among the rest; it contrives to illustrate his wisdom, and power, and goodness, by every institution it describes, and every event which it records. It places all creatures; angels, men, and beasts, in humble dependence at his feet; and it represents the working and tendency of all these creatures, *whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities and powers; whether they be things in heaven, or things in earth*, as finally setting up his own august and never failing dominion, *that God might be all in all.*

This is not a low, or partial, or unhallowed object; it is extended, holy, and worthy of God; and the book which tends to promote this object, must be heavenly. Such, and so many are the proofs from which we establish the inspiration of the scriptures. Some of them directly establish their inspiration, and others only that the apostles and some other writers of scripture were true and honest men. But this last is to the same purpose; for if these men were true and honest, then they *spoke the truth;* they cer-

tainly do quote the scriptures as divine. One of them has said expressly, that *all scripture is given by inspiration of God;* (2 Tim. iii. 16.) and another, *that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* (2 Pet. i. 21.)

But are we sure, that we have the *same* scriptures to which these writers referred, and which they assisted to furnish? Every thing else changes, and books are not unfrequently lost or corrupted. How do we know that we have the true scriptures? I answer: Most of the proofs, on which we have insisted, will apply to the volume we now have, for we have rested principally on *internal* evidences. But we are not wanting in historical proof. It is certain, from Josephus, that the same number of books, as now constitute the Old Testament, were in existence in our Saviour's time; and these are they to which he and his apostles so often referred. It is certain too, that all the books which now constitute the New Testament, were collected before the close of the third century; for catalogues were then made of them, and have come down to us.

And now, that these books have not been corrupted and made to speak a different language, or teach different doctrines from those

originally left us, we have this evidence, that all the various readings, in all the ancient manuscripts, both Greek and Hebrew, have been repeatedly collected and compared, by learned men; and the result has been, "that although these various readings amount to more than 30,000, they do not, in any instance, materially alter the sense."*

After this, we ought to rest pretty well assured, that the Bible we now possess, is that very Bible, which was made up by apostles and prophets; and that all the preceding proofs stand fair in favour of its inspiration.

*See the ultimate decision of Kennicutt, after 20 years study of the manuscript copies of the Old Testament; and a similar decision upon those of the New Testament, by Mill, Wetstein and Horne.

LECTURE II.

THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

HEBREWS xi. 6.

He that cometh unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

It is taught in this text, that some intelligent belief of the existence and attributes of God is necessary, in order to our worshipping him, or enjoying his favour. It is this truth that operates as a principal argument for calling your attention again to our course of doctrinal lectures. It is certainly true, that without some right knowledge of God, no man can acceptably worship him. This great subject, the *being and attributes of God*, stands next in order, therefore, to what has been already considered.

We know nothing, clearly, concerning God, except from what he has revealed in his word. We have much reason to rejoice, therefore, in that light of revelation, the truth and inspiration of which have already been

established. Without this light of revelation, we might feel, my brethren, as a certain heathen did on this subject. On being asked what he thought of the nature of God, he desired a day to consider it, before he gave his answer. At the end of the day, allowed for making up his mind, he desired another; and at the end of that, another; and finally, at the close of the third day, confessed, *that the more he thought of the subject, the more inscrutible it appeared to him, and the more unwilling he felt to give an answer!*

But even with the light of revelation, we are in difficulty; not but that we can understand well enough, *what it says* on this subject; but because the *nature of the subject* is so far beyond our comprehension. We know not the essence of material things. Much less can we conceive of the essence of spiritual beings; and least of all, of an Infinite Spirit, such as is God. I assure you, brethren, I approach the subject with awful reverence. I do feel my incompetency, even to collect and arrange the scriptures upon it; and I sincerely request your mutual prayers and assistance.

Who then is that mysterious being that we call God? What are his nature and attri-

butes, so far as he has revealed them unto us in his word? The Bible answers:

1. *That he is a Spirit. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* (John iv. 24.) But when we have repeated this text, we have said all we can profitably say concerning the essence of Deity. Have you any correct notion, my brethren, what a spirit is? Can you conceive of a being, that has neither shape nor likeness to any shape you have ever seen? Of a substance, that is not a substance in the usual sense of substance? A being, that could extend through all substances, with which we are acquainted, and not be impeded by them? A being, that might lie in your eye and not be *seen?* be held in your hand and not be *felt?* cast in a balance and not be *weighed?* Can you conceive of such a being, as possessing the most distinct and perfect idendity? Of having all the properties of a *person*—of *understanding*—of *willing*—of the most *energetic action?* Can you conceive of such a being? I confess I cannot; but such a being is that mysterious existence we call God; for saith the scripture, *he is a Spirit?*

2. *The proper name* of this existence, is JEHOVAH. *I am Jehovah, that is my name; and my glory I will not give to another.* (Isai. xlii.

8.) God, indeed, has other names given to him in scripture; but they are generally descriptive of *offices* or *attributes*, and attributes, which *might* belong to others. Thus, he is called ALE and ALEIM, because these words, in the original, refer to his *covenant faithfulness*. And sometimes they are compounded; as AL-SHADDAI, *God the munificent;* AL-SABBAOTH, *the God of armies*, and many others: but this name, JEHOVAH, seems descriptive of his essential being, or incommunicable attributes, and is most *appropriately* his own. In the original, it means, *he who is, or was*, simply and absolutely, (see Exod. iii. 14;) of course, it implies independent, *past, present and future existence*. HE WHO WAS, AND IS, AND IS TO COME, is the expression of it, in the New Testament. But this is only a translation; and I have scarce a doubt, that the Hebrew language has been preserved for this very reason, among others, that no other language can so properly express God's own name, as that in which he first communicated it. Our names of God do not fully reach the meaning of *Jehovah;* and if they did, they would not be the *very name*, which this Being has chosen to give himself.

For proof that this name, *Jehovah*, belongs *only* to the Eternal Deity, consult Amos v.

8th ; ix. 6th, and Exod. xv. 3d. We proceed with the attributes of this Being : He is, in the

3*d* place, ONE. "*Hear, oh Israel, the Lord our God is* ONE *Lord, or Jehovah.*" And that he is *exclusively* so, we hear again from the prophet Isaiah : *I am He ; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me ; I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.* (xliii. 10 and 11.) Indeed, it is evident, from the nature of things, that God can neither be divided, nor if he could, would it be possible for two Supreme Beings to co-exist. The very idea of God is that he is infinite ; but if he were divided, or if there could be another God, each could not be *infinite ;* for there is then something in each, which the other does not possess. How absurd, for instance, to talk of two *Almighty* Beings, when the very idea of one Almighty Being is, that he has all the power of the universe ; and so of any other infinite attribute. We wish to have it strongly impressed, that we hold strictly to the unity of *Jehovah's essence.* When we come to speak of the *mode in which that essence exists*, we may say something further on this subject ; at present, let it be remembered, that it is the

creed, not only of the Bible and reason, but of the whole church, that *God is one.*

4. *God is immense.* "*Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.*" (Job. xi. 7, 8, and 9.)

By the immensity of God, is meant, now, the same as his infinity: that in all his perfections he is beyond limits; his power, his wisdom, and every other attribute, is absolutely immeasurable; not only past finding out by us, but actually beyond *all* measurement.

We cannot take the most simple of his attributes, and trace it outward, without finding it to go beyond our research. We may compare it, and illustrate it by saying, as the prophet does of his strength, that *it takes up the hills, and spans the heavens;* but still we have only told what is *not* a match for it. What the real extent of the attribute is, we conceive not, nor can we conceive it. It is "an ocean of infinities, where all our thoughts are drowned." For a further and most sublime representation of this subject, see the 145th Psalm, 3d verse, and Isaiah xl. from 12th to the 17th verse.

5. *God is eternal.* He is called in his word, *the King eternal, immortal and invisible.* (1 Tim. i. 17.) *The high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity.* (Isai. lvii. 15.) The God whom Abraham worshipped, was Jehovah, the *Everlasting* God. (Gen. xxi. 33.) And that he endures *to* eternity, as well as exists *from* eternity, is affirmed in the 90th Psalm : *from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.* God's eternity may be proved, moreover, from the consideration that he exists independently, or *in and of himself.* Of course, there never was a time when he did not exist, unless you are willing to admit the absurdity that he existed before he existed, and began the production of his own existence. But it is unnecessary to resort to this proof, with such clear and abundant scriptures before us.—I am afraid, besides, to attempt to *reason* on such a subject. I feel much more like falling down and worshipping ; for surely, if there be any subject calculated to overwhelm us, it is this. We talk of the difficulties of the doctrines of a Trinity ; but I challenge any one to show wherein such a doctrine involves greater mysteries than God's eternity. It is not only above reason, but it does, in some things, *seem* to contradict reason. Let any one inform us, for instance, how an intelligent be-

ing can be self-existent, and yet eternal in that existence, and we will undertake to dispose of any other doctrine relating to the Deity. But it does not become us to speculate here, we had better fall down, as Isaiah did, when he saw the glory of God, and join the cry of the adoring seraphim, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty ?*

But, 6*thly*, God is not only eternal, but *immutable.* "*I am the Lord, says he, I change not.*" (Malachi iii. 6.) "*The Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning.*" (James i. 17.) This immutability respects his whole nature, his existence, and all his attributes. Its truth is evident from reason. God's existence could never have changed ; for if so, it must either have changed for the better or for worse. But not for the worse could it change ; and if for better, then it was comparatively bad before. Neither could any of his *attributes* have changed. Take his *knowledge*, for instance. If this has been increasing, then, in the backward reckoning, it is found decreasing ; and since you have an eternity to try it in, you will come to a period when it was very small ; and, finally, when it was *nothing !* And so of every other attribute ; they are all *unchangeable.* If they sometimes *seem* to change, as his

will and purpose are sometimes represented as changing, they *only* seem to do so. When God is said to *repent*, it is speaking after the manner of men, to describe his grief of mind towards sinners, and the change of his outward conduct towards them. And when he threatens a city or nation, but does not fulfil that threatening, the threat is always to be understood as *conditional;* i. e. he would destroy them if they did not reform. There is nothing more certain respecting God, than that he is, in all his attributes, *unchangeable*. We destroy his very nature, if we rob him of this.

7. *God is omniscient;* he knows all things. *All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* (Heb. iv. 13.) *Known unto God are all his works, from the foundation of the world.* (Acts xv. 18.) And that this knowledge is *particular* as well as *universal*, he is said to know all the *stars; he calleth them all by their names;*" yea, *the hairs of our head are all numbered.* (Luke xii. 7.) It would be a profitable illustration of this attribute, perhaps, to consider *how wise a man must be, who should know all things by a discernment of their causes.* There have been men, it is said, who could look through all the possible changes in a game of chess, and by

tracing beforehand, the relative operation of the whole complicated and extended movements, be, in every point, prepared to meet them. This is an astonishing effort ; but how much more astonishing would it be, to suppose a man, who could look, in the same way, through all the possible changes of nature and events, from creation down to eternity ! But this does, by no means, come up to God's knowledge, in as much as that he knows before hand, not only all the natural and moral changes in time, but all to the durations of eternity; and this not by investigating them, but *intuitively*, as if they were all before him !

8. *God is omnipotent.* All things which he wills, he can do; or he has all possible power. *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.* (Isai. xlvi. 10.) *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* (Gen. xviii. 14.) *Behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing; and Lebanon is not sufficient for him to burn, nor the beasts thereof for a burnt offering.*

Do we ask here, whether this implies that God can work *contradictions ?* whether he can deny himself, for instance, or be guilty of a lie ? The scripture has told us plainly that he cannot do these things ; but this does not

take away from his omnipotence, since the object of divine power is only to do those things which God *wills* to do. He cannot, surely, will to contradict his own perfections; but it would be a contradiction and an abatement of those perfections to suppose that God could lie. There can be no more perfect power than this, *for a Being to do whatsoever he wills to do*, and to have that will in favour of every perfection. And how great is this power! Divine benevolence, mercy and justice, are all infinite, and power to execute these, instantly follows the desire.

"He bids the sun forbear to rise,
"The obedient sun forbears;
"His hand in sackcloth spreads the skies,
"And seals up all the stars.

"Mountains by his almighty wrath,
"From their old seats are torn;
"He shakes the earth from south to north,
"And all her pillars, mourn."

9. Nearly allied to God's power, is his *dominion*. It only means that his rightful power is extended to all creatures; that obedience to Him throughout the universe, is not only a duty, considering the eminence of His nature and the multitude of his benefits, but that this obedience is, in some sense, render-

ed; that God exercises a perfect controul over all events, and will, sooner or later, bring them to subserve and promote his infinite glory and excellence. So extensive is this dominion, as to reach every event, from the falling of a leaf, to the fall of Angels from Heaven; so perfectly unfailing in every step of its progress, that at the great day of consummation, every step will appear to have been a cause, and every cause a successful one, in the grand work of setting up the everlasting and august kingdom of Jehovah. For proof that God exercises such a dominion as this, consult Job ix. 12—Daniel iv. 25 and 34.

10. In order to exercising such a dominion, another attribute seems necessary, and that is furnished: *God is omnipresent.* We cannot see how God could govern all things without being *every where present.* We think we see evidences that he is present in all things, and the heathen thought so before us. But the scriptures come in to our aid, and settle the question. They represent all things as full of God. When they extend the works of creation to vast and almost immeasurable bounds, they always place God's presence beyond them; and they represent him as searching every deep in which his enemies

hide themselves, and ready to meet and confront the most distant wanderer from his throne. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there: If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me.* (Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8, 9, 10.)

11. We add for the last of these attributes, that God is perfectly *free, or absolute.* By this, it is not meant that God has no reason for his acts and counsels, or that these reasons are tyrannical and arbitrary; but that he does not seek these reasons principally out of himself: that he did not wait, as his creatures do, for contingent events to transpire, before he fixed his plan; that he had a previous plan, grounded on eternal and immutable reasons within himself; and that he has never, for a moment, been disappointed in all the steps, by which it is coming to pass. *He doeth*, says one, *according to his will in the armies of heaven above, and among the inhabitants of this lower world.* Dan. iv. 35. *My counsel shall stand*, saith Jehovah, *and I will do all my pleasure.* It is a truth, made certain from the constitution of things, that there

must be one being who is perfectly supreme: it is a glorious truth that this being is such an one as God. It may be a humbling truth too, to his creatures, and especially to sinful creatures; but rather than question it, we had better say with Paul, *shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?* or if it be questioned, *has not the potter power over the clay, to form one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?* (Rom. ix.)

We proceed, now, to consider some of those attributes of God, which are *communicable.* The distinction of God's attributes into *communicable* and *incommunicable,* is not very accurate, and yet there is ground for some such designation. It is certain, that God cannot communicate his *eternity, omnipotence, &c.* to others, and therefore these perfections are called *incommunicable.* But there are other attributes, such as his love, holiness, justice, a part of which, at least, his creatures may partake; and therefore these are called *communicable* attributes. Some of these last, we are now to consider.

God, then, in the 12th place, *is just* and *true.* By the last of these is understood his infinite remove from all deception and falsehood; by the other, that he is so perfectly upright and disposed, from his very nature,

to do justly, that it is impossible righteousness performed, or sin committed, should not meet their reward. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* asks one; (see Gen. xviii. 25;) as if it was a thing to be taken for granted. Another represents "righteousness and judgment as the habitation of his throne." (Ps. xcvii. 2.) This justice is of a higher character than human justice, in that it never fails of reaching its object; in that this object is, in some of its actings, at least, not so much to reform as to vindicate; and in that it never pardons, as human justice sometimes does, for policy's sake, or through mere weakness, upon the bare confession of the subject. One argument is sufficient to prove this. If Divine justice could have pardoned the sinner, upon mere confession or repentance, then had the Father never punished sin in the sufferings of his innocent Son; but he did so punish sin, and this, more than all other considerations, shows what a high and indispensable attribute his justice is.

13. But once more. *God is good and benevolent.* "*How excellent is thy loving kindness,*" says the Psalmist; (xxxvi. 7;) *therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.* This goodness is sometimes spoken of *exclusively:* "*there is none good save one,*

says the Saviour, *that is God.*" (Mark x. 18.) It is sometimes expressive of *all the multitude* of his benefits towards us; as when it is said, *the goodness of God leadeth us to repentance.* But it is more frequently put, perhaps, for his *benevolence*, which is the same as *love*, or his *infinite disposition to kindness.* God is such a Being; and in this last sense, the attribute includes several others, as

1. Grace. In this, God is to be conceived as *willing* to do his creatures good, *gratuitously*, where no amiability in the subject invited it, and where there might even be antipathies to oppose it; but still, he does it, and *from his own mere good pleasure.*

The Lord passed by and proclaimed himself, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious. (Exod. xxxiv. 6.) Grace is also taken *effectively*, for its operation on the creation, and this from the same mere benevolence of God, as when we are so often said to be "saved by *grace.*"

2. Pity, is included under it. Pity respects God's feelings towards men on account of their *misery;* and oh how tender and how great it is. *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth we are but dust.* (Ps. ciii. 13, 14.)

3. His MERCY is included. As pity respects the *miserable*, mercy, like grace, respects the *undeserving*. It is a higher attribute : it is one far more difficult for us to exercise ; and yet this is that very perfection of which, so to speak, God is made up, more than of any other. *He keepeth mercy for thousands ; forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.* (Exod. xxxiv. 7.) Yea, *his mercy endureth forever.* (Whole of Ps. cxxxvi.)

FINALLY. *God is holy* "*Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises*, a God *doing wonders.*" (Exod. xv. 11.) *And one cried to another, saying, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.* (Isai. vi. 3.) With us, holiness is expressive either of some freedom from defect, or some positive valuable quality. In God, it includes both ; it is the combined excellence of all those attributes which have been ascribed to him. Would we attempt to conceive of God's holiness, then we must put together *all* his attributes ; see how valuable each is in itself ; see how mutually they reflect glory and excellence on one another, and then look at the *combined* effect of the whole. What a fearful splendour now shines upon us ! A Being *infinitely removed from all defect*, combining every *excellence* that has yet been conceived or existed, and all these pos-

sessed in an *immeasurable* degree. It is calculated by astronomers, that if the sun was only brought sufficiently near the earth, the increasing magnitude of its apparent orb, would, at length, fill the whole horizon of our vision, and we should see nothing, wherever we looked, but one vast and intolerable blaze of fire. So would it be, could we only approach sufficiently near to Deity. His spirituality, love, justice, holiness, would all increase, as we drew near to behold this great sight; and finally, ere we had approximated, within ten thousand ages travel of his throne, we should find every other object lost, and our mortal bodies consumed by his all filling blaze of brightness!

"Lo! these are *parts* of his ways; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" Amen.

LECTURE III.

THE TRINITY, OR MODE OF GOD'S EXISTENCE.

GENESIS i. 26.

And God said, let us make man in our own image.

It has been already shown, in treating of the being and attributes of God, that HE IS ONE ; and it was asserted, that this is the common belief of the whole Christian church. It remains, however, to enquire into *the nature of that* ONENESS, or to answer the question, *What is the mode or manner of God's existence?*

On this subject, the doctrine of far the greater portion of the protestant church, and the one which undoubtedly is agreeable to Scripture, is that which I shall attempt to express as follows, viz : *That this one Deity, or God-head, exists by a distinction of what may be called persons ; that these persons are the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*—a THREEFOLD *distinction*—*and therefore by us is called, Trinity ; and that each of these persons, though possessing some*

properties, which do not belong to the others, does, nevertheless, truly and properly possess the eternal and supreme nature of God, the one as much so as the other!

The doctrine stands in opposition, of course, to all those, who deny a distinction in the God-head, by whatever name they are called, and who regard the two last named personages, to wit, the Son and the Holy Ghost, as something less than the Supreme God.

Whether these propositions are correct, and according to scripture, is what we shall now attempt to determine. Never, certainly, have I entered upon the discussion of a doctrine, with so much anxiety; but it is not an anxiety which arises from any fear of not being able to establish it; for I honestly do not think there is one doctrine of the Bible, which has so much and such various scripture for it as this. Nor does my anxiety arise from the anticipated difficulties of my subject. If it seems to have these difficulties more than other doctrines, I believe it is, principally, because it has been opposed more. and pursued farther, as being of vital consequence to Christianity. I have said, already, that I do not see why this doctrine is more inscrutable than any other truth relating to an infinite God; and

I do really believe, if approached in a right spirit, it may be made to appear as plain and as convincing; but I feel anxious, principally, least I should not be able to make it as plain and convincing as I consider it important. I can hardly express to you, and perhaps it might not be judicious to do so, if I could, the eventful importance, which I consider attached to this subject. If it be a question whether the Deity exists in these equal persons, then, as it has been well said by one, "it is an awful question!" For if he does so exist, this distinction is in order to a most glorious manifestation of his mercy, and all our hope in the plan of redemption depends on it; but if he do not, then a false view of hope, wrong notions of God, the sin of aggravated idolatry, and a fearful train of other consequences, are justly chargeable upon much the largest, and apparently the most pious portion of the Christian church. You will not wonder, then, that I feel anxious to do some justice to this subject. You will expect me to labour with all possible simplicity and plainness, to lay the scripture proofs of our opinion fully before you.

Before we proceed farther, permit me to make a remark on the word PERSON, as it has been used in describing the distinctions

in the God-head. When thus used, Trinitarians do not mean by it, what is usually meant, when it is applied to other things; that is, they do not mean, *a totally separate identity of essence*, as we do when we say, I am one person, and my friend is another. Such a separate identity, possessed of all the independent powers of consciousness, judging and willing, would make, we grant, three different minds or Beings; and if each was God, there would undoubtedly be three Gods. But by the word PERSON, when applied to the Trinity, we mean an existence which has only, *in some respects*, different properties from other persons in that Deity; while in its consciousness, its judging, its willing, and counsel, and whatever belongs to the essentials of Deity, it is ONE. These persons, therefore, though Divine, are not other Gods; nor does the notion of such a distinction, involve any known contradiction. The word PERSON, is merely a term used out of its ordinary acceptation, for the sake of describing a *distinction in the existence of God's* essence, which we cannot, by a better word, express.

The term PERSON, thus explained, it is hoped our propositions will be intelligible. I now state them again, viz: *That the Deity, or God-*

head exists with a distinction, which may properly be called of persons : that these persons are the Father, Son and Holy Ghost ; and that each of these, while possessing some properties of existence, which are not common to the others, does, nevertheless, truly and properly possess the Divine and Supreme nature, one as much so as any other. We proceed to the proofs : and I offer,

1. *Those Scriptures of the Old Testament, where God is spoken of in the plural number.* Pertinent to this, is the passage which has been selected for our text. *And God said let us make man in our own image.* (Gen. i. 26.) Here the name of God, *Aleim*, and the verb, *to make*, are both in the *plural.* And to show that it is not a casual usage, the plural pronoun *our* is also used, and the form of expression is repeated in chapter iii. 22. *Behold the man has become as one of* us, *to know good and evil.* Now the natural impression upon an unprejudiced reader of this passage, would be, that God, as Deity, was spoken of in the plural number, because there was a distinction of persons concerned in creating man ; and that there were none of them *inferior* persons, who are here spoken of, I hope will be manifest from considerations hereafter to be adduced.

But no; it is said, that this form of expression is used, merely for the sake of giving dignity to the Deity, just as kings and nobles sometimes use the plural for the singular, and say WE, instead of I, when only one person is intended.

But this cannot be admitted; for,

First, the usage now adduced, is the invention of *pride*, for the purpose of giving false dignity to ambitious men; and is therefore unworthy of the Deity.

Secondly. It is contrary to the idiom of the ancient, simple language of the Hebrews. *Eben Ezra*, a Jewish writer, declares this expressly, and says, that the royal idiom among men, is the invention of pride, and introduced long after the creation. He labours to show, too, that in those instances, where the plural *has been thought* to be used for the *singular*, in reference to men, as in Gen. xxix. 27, more than one person is intended.

But *thirdly*, and conclusively. If this were God's mode of speaking of himself, merely for dignity's sake, then might it have been expected, that he *would always have used this form.* It is most obvious, however, that the plural is *not always used*, nor generally. (See the first verse of the Bible. See also, chap-

ter ii. verse 7th, and almost innumerable other passages, where the singular is used.) Sometimes, indeed, the *name* of God is plural, and the verb connected with it singular, as if to express unity of action, combined with plurality of persons. Sometimes both are singular; and sometimes, as in our text, both are plural. Now, upon the supposition of a distinction in the God-head, this is perfectly explainable; but it is not explainable on any other supposition, nor can we believe, that without some special reason for it, God would have used such a form of expression in his word.

We cannot admit, therefore, that this passage is to be understood, as used for *the sake of dignity;* and if it be taken as it stands, it certainly establishes the position, that there is a distinction of plurality in the mode of God's existence. We have given the more attention to this passage, since, all along, it is intended to depend more on a few incontrovertible texts, than the multitude of others, which might be cited.

2. I offer, in proof of our doctrine, that class of Scriptures, *where God is distinguished from God, in the same passage.* In Hozea i. 7, God says to the prophet, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them,* BY THE

LORD *their God.* This is exactly similar to Gen. xix. 24, where it is said, *Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire,* FROM THE LORD, *out of Heaven.* And to a still more unequivocal passage, in the xlv. Psalm, where, speaking to Christ, in his mediatorial character, it is said by the Father, *therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows.* In all these passages, it is not necessary to enquire, now, whether some inferior being is spoken of under the *names* of Lord and God ; we must be contented to wait for the consideration of this, until we come to speak of the character of Christ. The object of citing the texts at present, is to show, that, in the language of Scripture, God is often distinguished from God ; and that, therefore, there must be a plurality in the Deity. This certainly, if we can understand language at all, they do establish.

3. Let us attend to a few of those Scriptures, where different *persons of the Deity are spoken of in the same acts, and yet all those acts, such as are ascribed to the Lord, or Jehovah.* This will advance us a step farther in our leading propositions ; since it will show, not only that a distinction exists in the Godhead, but that the distinction is *threefold,* cor-

responding with what is ascribed, afterwards, more fully, to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A striking passage of this character is found in Isaiah xlviii. 16. *Come ye near unto me, hear ye this ; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning ; from the time that it was there am I : and now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.* Here the person speaking, is undoubtedly Christ, who is called by the remarkable name of I AM, and said to be from the beginning. But what we particularly have to observe of him, from this passage, is that the "*Lord God*, and his *Spirit*," send him ; *Christ sent*—the *Lord God*, and his *Spirit*, sending him. What is this but a Trinity ? See also, the parallel passage to this, in Isai. lxi. 1, which Christ appropriated to himself, according to the New Testament. (See Luke iv. 18.)

The same three persons are represented as engaged in the act of delivering Israel from Egypt, and carrying them to the land of Canaan. *That God the Father* was engaged in it, is not disputed. *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* (Exod. xx. 2.) That the *Son* was engaged in it, appears from Exod. iii. 2, as compared with the 6th verse, and with the 23d chapter, 20th and

21st verses; for he which is called *God's angel*, in one of these places, is called the *God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, in another; and in still another, it is the angel whom God had *sent*, and whom the children of Israel were to fear, because *his name* was in him. This corresponds with what is said in Isaiah: "That in all their affliction, he was afflicted, and the *angel of his presence* saved them." This angel of God's presence, was undoubtedly, then, the Son; for he is here distinguished from God, and yet represented as working with God; and now that the *Spirit* also bore a part in this great transaction, is explicitly said in Isai. lxiii. 10. "But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit."

I repeat an observation here, in substance, twice made before; and that is, that whether the other persons, here spoken of, as *acting* with God, were inferior persons, or mere influences, is not the *present* subject of inquiry. The proofs, yet cited, have been intended to show merely, that *there exists a distinction in the Deity*, and that this distinction is *threefold*, into Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Let us proceed with our arguments. We offer, in the *fourth place*, those passages

from the New Testament, where *these three persons are appealed to as equally divine in acts of worship.* Two illustrious examples of this kind are found in the *baptismal service.* and the so often repeated *apostolick benediction.* The first of these, in Matth. xxviii. 19, runs as follows: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* We observe of this passage, that it is a formula of religious *worship.* No more direct or solemn act of worshipping God can be, than that of baptizing, in his name: but you see that this worship is of three distinct persons, and that one is as much honoured by it as any other. Could this be, unless each was divine, and each of equal dignity, and that it was one God after all, who is worshipped as thus existing? It has been thought further, that the use of the phrase *in the name*, here favours the same construction. It is not in the *names* of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as if three separate objects of worship were intended, but in the *name*, as a term, which, in the unity of their essence, might be common to all. Of the apostolick benediction, "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all,*" nearly the same remarks may be made. It is cer-

tainly an act of solemn worship to God. Three persons are nevertheless mentioned, one with as much honour as any other; and the passage has this further in it, that it names these several persons of the Trinity, *with reference to their appropriate offices. Grace* is properly assigned to the Son; *Love* to the Father; and *Communion* to the Holy Spirit; but all are divine, and all worshipped alike. If we believe, now, that the Supreme God is the only proper object of worship, these passages will certainly establish a three-fold distinction in the eternal Godhead.

5. To the same end, I shall now cite a passage, where certain divine gifts are said to be received *from the different persons* of the Trinity, and yet all said to be of *one God.* 1. Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same *Spirit;* and there are differences of administrations, but the same *Lord;* and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same *God*, which worketh all in all." By the *Lord*, in the 5th verse, is undoubtedly meant Jesus Christ, as may be seen by comparing it with verse 3d. and then the force of the passage consists in this: that certain gifts ascribed to the Spirit, and certain others ascribed to Christ,

and certain others ascribed to God, are all, nevertheless, said to be of *one God.* Is there any escaping the force of this proof? Will it help the difficulty to say, that some of these gifts are such as might come from created beings, and, *therefore*, from Christ and the Spirit? But could it then be said that the *same* gift, which was from Christ, or the Spirit, was, in that very condition of it, also *from God?* No; there is but one way of making this remarkable language consistent, and that is by supposing a distinction in the persons of the God-head.

6th, and lastly. For the present, we shall cite the extraordinary passage in 1 John, v. 7, where the whole doctrine we have yet taught *is explicitly asserted.* "*There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.*" We are not ignorant, brethren, that the authenticity of this passage has been strenuously called in question. I suppose a hundred volumes have been written to prove that it is not, and as many to prove that it is, a genuine portion of the word of God. But with this we have nothing to do at present. I rest satisfied for myself, with regarding it as true as any other portion of scripture; and we may take occasion to ob-

serve here, that it is manifest, from the great exertions which have been made to reject it from the sacred canon, how strong and conclusive the passage is viewed to be, if admitted. Taking for granted, then, the authenticity of the passage, let us see if there is any way, by which its force can be avoided. There is only one, in which it has been attempted; it is by altering its evident meaning. There are three that bear record, it is admitted, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are *one;* but one what? One, it is said, in testimony, not in being; and the same method is adopted for destroying a parallel passage in John x. "*I and my Father are one.*" But the above cannot be the meaning of the passage; for,

1. This part of the verse is not speaking of *testimony* but of *persons.* It had spoken of *bearing witness* before, but something is *added* of the persons *who* bear this witness; *and* these three—what! *agree?* that had been said before—no; *are* one. It is plain as it stands; it tells what it *does* mean: who has any right to *add* what it *might* mean?

2. When oneness in testimony *is* meant, as is the case in the next verse, where the Spirit, water and blood, are mentioned, the word *agree* is used. "There are three

that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three *agree* in one." If *agreement* were meant before, why was not the same expression used? On the present supposition, it cannot be told us: on a different supposition, it is easy; for when the spirit, water and blood, are the subject, it could not be said they were actually ONE; it is said, therefore, that they *agree in one.* But when the Father, the Word and the Spirit, are the subject, you have a Trinity, which can be one in essence, and the text therefore says, *they are* ONE.

And that this conclusively is its meaning, you have only to look at the next verse, where all this witness, whether of the Father, Word or Holy Spirit, is called, nevertheless, *the witness of God.* "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of GOD is greater, for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son." On the whole, then, we cannot but think that the true meaning of the passage, is the plain, unglossed and unaugmented reading of it, as it stands; and if it be, and the passage itself is genuine, it asserts explicitly, a Trinity in the God-head, "*There are three, and these three* ARE *one.*"

We are aware, that there are many other passages, which are usually cited from the

New Testament, to establish a Trinity in the God-head; such as the *baptism of the Saviour*, where the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are certainly introduced; and that passage in John xv. 26, in which Christ promises to send the *Comforter* unto his disciples, from the *Father*. These passages are conclusive in proof of three persons; but they do not, so clearly as those which have been cited, exhibit these persons as real distinctions in one God. And we have before expressed our design of resting this doctrine, not so much on the multitude of texts, as the strength and clearness of a few.

Let us now review our proofs, and draw, for the present, to a conclusion. The point thus far attempted to be made out, is, that the one God exists, by a distinction of three persons, wherein one is as much represented to be the Supreme God as another; and that these persons are the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. In proof of it, we have adduced those Scriptures, such as our text, *where God speaks of himself in the plural number;* those, *where God is distinguished from God*, as when "the Lord rained, upon Sodom and Gomorrah, fire and brimstone from the Lord, out of heaven;" and *those acts of Jehovah*, such as the liberation of Israel from

Egypt, *in which three persons are found engaged, each performing divine works, and called in many instances, one Jehovah.* From the New Testament have also been produced, *the formula of the baptismal service, and the Apostolick benediction;* in each of which, these persons are *worshipped* with equal honour: the passage *concerning the diversities of their gifts*, in Corinthians, which gifts are nevertheless ascribed to one God: and, finally, the *remarkable passage* of 1 John v. 7, which absolutely asserts our doctrine, and is not to be set aside, either by glosses, or by calling in question its authenticity. These proofs do appear to me to establish the doctrine of a Trinity, so far as we have yet considered it; but these are, by no means, all. Every proof which we have yet to offer in favour of the divine character of Jesus Christ, and all that shall appear for giving the same honour to the Holy Spirit, are also proofs of a Trinity; for, if it shall be made to appear, that either of these do truly and properly possess the supreme nature of God, it will be still more certain, that there is a real distinction in the God-head.

But we pause here for the present, and in begging your patient attention to the whole of this great subject, we have only to suggest

again the important relation it holds to all that is solemn, and all that is valuable to us. If God, my brethren, is never rightly worshipped, but when he is worshipped in spirit and in *truth;* if he has been pleased to reveal himself as existing in a Trinity of persons, and if he has connected *that mode* of his existence, with all that is precious and consolatory in the hope of our salvation, who shall be able to count the consequence of understanding him properly! Who shall sufficiently fear the danger of a mistake on this subject!

The subject has also increasing consequence, from the character of the age in which we live. As the doctrine of the Trinity has always been more or less assailed, since the fourth century of the church's history; so it seems likely, from the character of our times, still to be called in question. Without a special provision for the trial, I tremble to anticipate what yet may be the state of some of our children, or children's children, from an opposition to this doctrine.

When the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord will undoubtedly lift up a standard against him; but this is not to be expected, unless his people are prepared for it; and one way of being prepared is, more

and more to make ourselves acquainted with the truth; and more and more to cleave to the simple and unquestioned teachings of the holy scriptures. Such an importance do I view this subject as having, with the rising generation especially, that were I now a youth, I should think no degree of attention too great to devote to this study. I would commit all the scriptures relating to the doctrine in question; I would abide by them in all their simplicity, and I would pour forth my prayers to Father, Son, and sacred Spirit, as all holy men have done before us, for the grace, illumination and strengthening, which should establish me in it firmly.

Finally: How glorious a Being must that be who has thus revealed his mode of existence! The perfection, the mystery, the adaptedness to our hopes of such an existence, ought all to fill us with admiration. We ought to worship, while we pause here, and cry out, *Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Lord and my God!*

LECTURE IV.

THE DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST.

ROMANS ix. 5.

Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

In previous lectures, we have considered the UNITY of God, and the *manner in which God is believed to exist*, to wit: by a distinction of persons. We must think that such a distinction was made out, and that it appeared from the New Testament, more especially, that these persons are three, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Only *the first part* of our general proposition, however, has yet been considered, that God exists by distinction of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

We have yet to consider the particular character of each of these persons, from which will appear, as we believe, not only farther proof of the distinctions of the Godhead, but satisfactory evidence, also, *that each of these persons is truly and properly Divine.*

What we have before us, at present, is THE CHARACTER OF THE SECOND PERSON IN THE GOD-HEAD, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The subject is important, not only as being the principal point in all the doctrines of a Trinity, but as it involves, if we are not mistaken, the vital principles of our religious hopes. The two points which we shall attempt to establish, and which, if established, will secure all that we desire at present, are the following:

I. "THAT THE BEING WE CALL JESUS CHRIST, DOES REALLY POSSESS THE SUPREME NATURE OF GOD:"

II. "AND THAT HE DOES REALLY POSSESS A SINLESS HUMAN NATURE."

1. That Being, whom we call Jesus Christ, DOES REALLY POSSESS THE SUPREME NATURE OF GOD.

We have used some care in framing this proposition, with a view to preclude, if possible, any mistake as to our meaning.

We say, "he possesses the supreme nature of God;" not that he is *called* God merely, nor that he is *in the place* of God by a mere delegated authority; nor yet that God only *dwells in him*, as he is sometimes said to dwell in his children. These we do *not mean* of Christ, and for reasons which will appear hereafter;

but we mean simply and plainly, "that Christ does really, and of himself, possess the supreme nature:" not the same *person* in God, as the Father or the Spirit, but the same *divinity* in one undivided essence. He is, in nature, the *Supreme God;* as much so, as the Father or any other person of the God-head.

This is our belief, and for proof of it, we rely solely upon the scriptures: not that in reason, or in the nature of things, there can be any thing found against this doctrine; but because it is a subject on which revelation alone has instructed us. Revelation alone ought, therefore, to be consulted, in determining what is true of it.

But it is time to hear it speak.

1. And the *first* class of passages which we have to offer, shall consist of those "in which Christ is called God; and so called, with circumstances and connexions, such as leave no doubt that the Supreme God is meant."

Let us take for the first of these, the beginning of the gospel according to John. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." "The world was made by him." All we are con-

cerned to have remembered from the passage, at present, is this, that this WORD, who is evidently Jesus Christ, as appears from the 14th verse, is called God here, and that, in the *connexion*, he is said *to have made the world. How* Jesus Christ made the world, whether by his own or a delegated power, will be considered in its proper place.

The next passage is at Heb. i. 8, 10 and 12. "But unto the Son he saith, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same and thy years shall not fail."

Here it is expressly said, that the Son of God is the person spoken of, and in two passages, which are applied to him from the Old Testament, (viz. from the 45th and 102d Psalms,) he is called *God* and *Lord*, and is *said to have laid the foundation of the earth.*

1 John v. 20. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

If there were any doubt whether Jesus Christ is the person meant in this latter clause of the text, we would not only say that the most rational construction of the passage requires it, but refer to those numerous other scriptures, where the epithets *Eternal Life*, *Life in Himself*, *and Life* in the abstract, are applied to the same person. It is John's language, especially, to call Jesus Christ the *Eternal Life*, and he here affirms, that this Eternal Life is the *true God.*

Take once more, in this class, the words of our text—" of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."

This passage is sufficiently explicit as it stands in our translation. In the original, however, and even in the corrected copy of *Griesback*, where every art seems to have been used to give it a different meaning, it is still clearer. The pointing of our version, which separates the phrase, *who is over all*, from God, is there omitted. So it reads—" Who is *the over all God ;*" and what is this but the Supreme God ?

Thus we have, in this passage, the Supreme Deity of Christ absolutely affirmed.

Let us now consider the force of this class of texts, as taken together. We have se-

lected them, as before remarked, not only because Christ is called God in them; but because he is so called God, with such connexions and adjuncts, as to render it clear that none other than the Supreme God is meant. In some of them he is said to be that God, "who created the universe:" in one, that he is the *true God;* and in another, that he is "the God over all and forever blessed."

Will it do to answer here, that Christ is only *called* God, and that this name is sometimes given to inferior beings in scripture? *How* is it given to them? we ask. Always, without any exception, in such connexions, and with such qualifications, as to shew that the Supreme God *is not meant* in those instances. "I said ye are gods," it is written o civil magistrates, "BUT ye shall die like men." And thus of Moses: "I have made thee A god unto Pharaoh;" and so Satan is called THE *god of this world.* But do we not discover that in all these instances, there is something connected, which shows clearly that *inferior* beings are meant? But in the passages adduced, where this name is applied to Christ, it is precisely the reverse. Here the adjuncts show that it *is* the Supreme God who is meant—the attributes of *creating power*, of *eternal truth* and of *supremacy*,

being expressed in the same connexion, and they are so expressed as to lead to the grossest mistake, if the Supreme God be not intended. No man, in his senses, would be in danger of supposing the Supreme Deity to be ascribed to civil magistrates, when they are called *gods* in the plural number, and when it is added, "but ye shall die like men;" but a person, in his senses, would be likely to mistake, if we *are* indeed mistaken, in the sense of the passages, which give this name to Christ. He would be likely to imagine that the Supreme God was intended; for he now hears him not only called God, but called so with qualifications clearly implying his supremacy, and other eternal perfections. On this argument, it is confessed, we do rest, for one of our strongest proofs in favour of the proper divinity of Christ. If we wish to see other passages, where the names of God are given to Jesus Christ, let us consult the following:

Isai. ix. 6, and vii. 14; Jeremiah. xxxiii. John xx. 28; 1 Timothy iii. 16; Malachi iii. 1; Matthew i. 23; Titus ii. 13; and Rev. i. 8; in which last, no less than *four* of the distinguishing appellations of Deity are given to the Saviour. There is, besides all these, a large and powerful array of texts to

the same purpose obtained, by comparing them as they stand in the Old Testament, with the quotations of them in the *New*. A reference to some of these may be found below.*

Let us now proceed to our *second* proof.

2. Christ is really divine, according to those passages of scripture, *which ascribe to him an* EQUALITY *with God*. Phil. ii. 5, 8. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who also being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." John xiv. 9. "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." John v. 19. "What things soever he (the Father) doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." And 21, 23, of the same chapter. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the FATHER." Now, without stopping to inquire at present, how it is that a language implying

* Compare Isai. viii. 13, 14, with 1 Peter ii. 8. Isai. xl. 3, with Math. iii. 1, 3. Psalm lxxviii. 18, with 1 Cor. x. 9. Isai. vi. throughout, with John xii. 39.

Christ's *mediatorial inferiority* is also used in some of these passages, let us candidly ask ourselves, if an *equality* of *condition*, of *power*, of *honour* and *dignity*, are not here clearly ascribed to the Saviour.

We proceed to our *third proof:*

3. Christ really possesses the divine or supreme nature, "*in that the incommunicable attributes of Deity are ascribed to him in Scripture.*" Here we shall solicit your patience, while we enumerate several of these attributes.

Omniscience is ascribed to Christ. (Matthew xi. 27.) "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (John ii. 24.) "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men." (Rev. ii. 23.) "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts." And John xxi. 17. "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

Omnipotence, or Almighty power is ascribed to Christ. (Phil. iii. 21.) "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Heb i 3.) "Upholding all things by the word of his power." And Rev.

i. 8. "I am—the Almighty." All these passages are applied to the second person of the Trinity, and their import is so plain as to require no comment. *They ascribe to Christ omnipotence.*

Eternity is ascribed to Christ. "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." (Micah v. 2.) "The same was in the beginning, with God." (John i. 2.) "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John xvii. 6.) Isaiah says in chap. ix. 5, "His name shall be called *the everlasting Father.*" This expression has sometimes been rendered the *Father of eternity.* But we apprehend the word Father is used here, not as a distinction of personality in the Godhead, but as an expression of Christ's paternal character in the providence of all his works. And this paternal character of his is said to be *everlasting.* (1 John v. 20.) "This is the true God and eternal life." (Rev. xxii. 13.) "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last;" and in chapter i. 8, the same expressions are used with this addition: "Which is, and which was, and which is to come;" the very import of the word *Jehovah*, the expression of God's eternity, which is so often used in the Old Testament.

We have great reason to be thankful, that this attribute of eternity is so fully applied to Christ in scripture. It is every thing in this inquiry, and, rightly understood, this argument perhaps would go to preclude all others.*

Immutability is ascribed to Christ. We have before quoted the passage from Heb. i. where God the Father addresses the Son as immutable, or *remaining* the same, while all created things *wax old*, and *perish as a garment.*

Omnipresence is ascribed to Christ.—(John iii. 13.) "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which *is* in heaven;" and Mat. xviii. 20. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there *am I* in the midst of them."

Lastly, of these attributes, *creative power* is ascribed to Christ. The passages are numerous. I shall cite only two: (Heb. i. 10.) "And, thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands." And Col. i. 16. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones,

* The writer would be happy to see it thus pursued. If Christ be really an eternal Being, all else that pertains to Deity, must follow, and the view has this excellence besides, that it does not easily admit a perversion.

or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him."

To this passage, however, and several similar ones, an exception has been taken, because the term, by him, *dia autou*, is used; as if it implied that Christ was only a secondary or instrumental agent in the work of creation. It is very certain, however, that *dia*, *by*, is often used to denote the principal as well as the instrumental cause; (see Hosea i. 7, and Rom. xi. 36:) and if it were not, the proof that Christ has creative power in himself, is not invalidated by it; for the other passage quoted, declares it in the active form: "Thou, Lord," (i. e. Christ here,) "in the beginning, *hast laid* the foundation of the earth." Christ did then, by his own power, create the world: and now how strong is the proof of his supreme divinity arising from this, if we reflect what is necessary in order to such a work! It is absolute folly, to talk of any thing less than infinite power and wisdom, as capable of creating the world; and God has, accordingly, always appealed to the work of creation, as in that very thing he differed from inferiour gods. Read to this purpose, Isai. xliv. 24; Jer. x. 12; Acts xvii. 23--26, and the whole of the xl. ch. of Isaiah. How often do you here find it taken for granted, that the

God who *made the heavens*, must be the true God! How do you hear *all idols* called as naught because they had *not made the heavens!* And how do you find men described as inexcusable, because they did not know God, even his eternal power and Godhead, *from the things that are made!* I confess, that to me, it is one of the most unanswerable of all the arguments in favour of Christ's supreme nature, that the *attribute of creating power* is ascribed unto him.

But will it be said now, that all these attributes, which we have seen ascribed to Christ, are to be considered as *delegated attributes?* That he has them only as they are *given* to him, and therefore, that he may still be a created or inferiour being? It might, perhaps, be said; and, as it is the only remaining method of escaping the force of this argument, it ought to receive a full answer. We answer first, that it is an entire absurdity to talk of delegating these attributes of Deity. Do we not remember that most of them are those called *incommunicable* attributes? Can God give his omnipotence, his omniscience, his eternity for instance, or any other essential and infinite attribute to another? What then would that God be, who should remain? If the attribute were infinite, and infinity be

essential to Deity, how could he remain Deity, having parted with it?

But we have another answer to give. No created being could be the receptacle of these attributes, if God could part with them. Can created beings hold infinity? If Omnipotence were to be given to a being, must not an omnipotent being be created in order to retain it? and will you then bear the absurdity, of one omnipotence giving place that there might be another omnipotence? or will you admit that two omnipotent beings can co-exist in the same universe? Of all the views of Christ that can possibly be taken, this involves the greatest contradictions.

And, after all, the question, whether he is a delegated being, may easily be settled by determining another question: Is he an eternal Being? We have supposed that this was proved: if it was, then there is an end to the notion of a delegation; for it will hardly be maintained, we think, that his eternity was delegated, lest it should be asked, *when* it was delegated and *by whom*, that had a previous existence?

4. The *fourth* and last argument that we shall adduce, for the proper divinity of Christ, is, that *divine worship is ascribed to him in scripture.* And we are willing to explain

here, before producing the texts, the ground on which the argument has its force. We all know that God has said, "He would have no other gods before Him," and we have said something of the manifest reason *why* none but God may be worshipped. We cannot too often advert to it. What is implied in an act of worship, if it be not this, that we acknowledge the object of worship to be supreme, and ourselves, with all else, to be dependant on him? Why do we reject the worship of the virgin Mary, and other created mediators, as practiced by Roman Catholicks? They might insist that these mediators were exalted beings, and that God had put such honour on them, as to render them worthy of worship. But no: we tell them promptly, God has declared, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou worship." And we insist besides, that the very notion of worship, implies such an ascription of supremacy to the object of worship, as can never be due to a *creature.*

Now let us carry these principles into the case before us, and we shall see that the very objection which they afford to the worship of saints by Roman Catholicks, they afford against the worship of Christ, on the supposition that he is a created being. Will it be said

that God has put distinguished honour on Christ? so might it be said of them. Will it be added that God's influence and image was in Christ, so that it is He who is honoured through his inferiour representative? so might it be said, and with as much plausibility, of them. But no—the express command comes against us with all its force—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only* shalt thou worship;" and the reason stares us continually in the face, that to worship any being is to acknowledge him to be supreme.

With these principles in mind, let us now hear some of those passages, in which Christ is represented as an object of worship. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." "And, again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." (Heb. i. 6.) "And when he had taken the book," (the well known passage is in Rev. v. 8—14.) "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, havingevery one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by

thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever. And the four beasts said Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth forever and ever."

I profess unto you, my brethren, that when I read such passages as this, I am filled with a singular mixture of emotions. I feel, for a moment, as if all argument for the proper divinity of Christ, were next to sacrilege. To fall instantly down and join the heavenly host in adoring Him, seems an employment much more becoming me. I am

then torn away from this vision of his glory, by the painful reflection that he has nevertheless been imagined to be less than the Supreme Being, and I really feel as if I could not endure it. Whether in the spirit of piety, I cannot say; but I really do feel as though I could not endure, to have a being, of whom such things are said, degraded to a creature. It does as much violence to my veiws of truth and consistency, and all that is sacred and precious in the representations of scripture, as it would to talk of a God of wood or stone, and to command our worship for it.

Whether, on the whole, our first proposition, that Christ really and properly possesses the supreme nature of God, be made out, must now be submitted. The classes of scripture on which we have relied for proof, have been those where Christ is *called God*, and with such adjuncts, as to show that the Supreme God is meant; those in which *equality to God* is ascribed to him; those in which he is represented as *possessing the incommunicable attributes* of Deity, and finally those which present him as *an object of worship*.

We do not rest here, however, because more, much more, of proof might not be adduced; but because, if these scriptures do

not convince us, we know not where to look for conviction, and because we have another proposition respecting the character of Christ, yet to be considered.

II. *Our second proposition is*, THAT CHRIST REALLY POSSESSES A SINLESS HUMAN NATURE.

Very little will suffice under this head. Where the proper divinity of Christ is admitted, his human nature is seldom called in question. So that if our first proposition has been established, it will render argument less necessary in favour of the present.

As singular and truly remarkable views, however, have sometimes been started in relation to the manner in which the Son of God came into our world, it may be proper to state what we mean by the *human nature of Christ*, and refer to some of those passages by which our views are supported. We believe, then, that Jesus Christ did really possess a sinless human nature, similar to that which Adam possessed before the fall; and that he took this human nature into a mysterious union with his divine nature before possessed; so forming one glorious God-man, and mediator, for the purposes of redemption. And the first passage we shall offer, in support of this view, is the one selected for our text: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as

concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." If Christ descended from the Jewish fathers, *according to the flesh*, it would need no laboured argument, we should suppose, to prove that he possessed a human nature. The passage has this in it, moreover, that it clearly implies a *two fold* nature in Christ. To say that he descended from the Jewish fathers, *according to the flesh*, is about the same as to say, that he had *some other descent*—else why is this so carefully distinguished? Similar passages are found in Rom. i. 3, and Acts ii. 30. "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ," says the first, "who was made of the seed of David, *according to the flesh*;" and in the other, we are told concerning this David, that, "being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, *according to the flesh*, he would raise up Christ, to sit on his throne: he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ." And again, in John i. 14, "the word *was made flesh*, and dwelt among us."

Texts, still more unequivocal, are found in Hebrews ii. 14 and 16. "For as much then as the children are made partakers of *flesh and blood*, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he

might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "For verily he took not on *him the nature of angels;* but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham, wherefore in all things, it behoved Him, to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

Added to all this, which goes to shew expressly, that Christ took human nature, and that he took it into connexion with a nature before possessed, we might refer you to the whole history of his life. Christ was *born, grew in stature and in wisdom; was hungry and thirsty; ate, drank, slept, walked, suffered, bled, died, and rose again,* in corporeal substance, from the grave. He is called a *man,* and the *son of man,* perhaps some hundreds of times in the New Testament; and if all this do not prove that he possessed a proper human nature, a nature differing both from that of angels and of God, then have we no evidence, brethren, nor could we have any, that you or I possess a human nature!

But it is time to draw towards a close. Let me call your attention to one or two reflections. And

First: How does the view now taken of

Christ, *reflect light and glory on all the teachings of scripture?* We have before shown, that there existed *a distinction* in the God-head from eternity. We believe, that when man was created and had fallen, the second person in this God-head assumed the place of mediator, upon the work of which he even then, in some measure, entered; and that in the fulness of time, he actually took human nature upon him for finishing the work more perfectly.

Now, in reference to one or another of these views of the second person in the Trinity, will every passage of scripture be found consistent, and every representation which they give of him, perfectly harmonious. (We do think this an idea of some importance.)

A leading difficulty occurs in looking at this subject, arising from the apparently contradictory representations of scripture, respecting the character of Christ. He is called the *Lord of David* and the *Son of David:* He is the *root* and *offspring* of David: He is represented as knowing *all things*, and yet *not knowing* some things: He is the *Almighty*, and yet all power is *given* unto him. He is called *God;* represented and acknowledged as God; he is also called the Son of God, and a *man* of inferior and dependent exis-

tence. The apparent absurdity of all this presses, and the question is properly asked—What is the expedient for rendering these scriptures consistent? We answer: admit them to mean just all they say repecting Christ, and just as they say it, our view of them will make it all harmonious. Admit the eternal distinction in the God-head, the mediatorial office, and the human as well as the divine nature of Christ, and all is solved—solved and easy, so far at least, as it is desirable it should be to such beings as we are. The key fits every ward of the lock: it is therefore the true key. We repeat the remark: It is this view of Christ, and this alone, which saves the consistency of apparently clashing scriptures. The experiment may be made. If you make him a *man*, you know not what to do with the passages which so fully ascribe the incommunicable attributes of Deity to him. If you make him an *angel*, the same or greater difficulties will follow you, besides the appaling consequence of destroying all *consistent* hope of salvation by his merits.

I am not at present, however, carrying this subject into its consequences: I am only showing how the supposition of a Trinity, as now explained, meets all the representations

of scripture. Can the same be affirmed, with truth, of any other theory?

The other reflection is such as I hope may interest our hearts as well as our judgments. *What a glorious manifestation of Deity is that, which is thus made in the person of Jesus Christ!* How hopeless had been our condition, as sinners, without it! How obscure our views of Deity! and how much abbreviated our happiness, had we even remained holy! We trembled the other day, my friends, as we attempted to gain a scriptural view of the majestick attributes of God: we might have trembled always, with such awful and retiring majesty, had he always appeared to sinners, had he never assumed another nature. "No man hath seen the Father, at any time, but the only begotten Son, that dwelleth in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him."

It is in the mediatorial character, and especially in the human nature assumed by Christ, that God has, so to speak, let himself down to the observation of his creatures. He has laid aside the mantle of his consuming majesty, and we may now gaze upon the *great sight* and live. "Here the whole Deity is seen;" but it is seen in reflected and a meliorated brightness. It is *our* nature too

that we see thus glorified; it is *our* interest that we see brought so near to the sacred God-head; it is *our friend* and *brother* still, who is thus made the medium for reflecting down and softening the otherwise intolerable splendour of the Deity; and we cannot but rejoice in the glorious manifestation.

Oh, brethen! if you ever get to heaven, you will understand well what I now aim at communicating: and when ages of its happiness are rolled away; when you have become intimately acquainted, both with the nature and the enjoyment of God, you will say that the sweetest and most expressive name, by which he ever yet revealed himself, was IMMANUEL—GOD WITH US. Amen.

LECTURE V.

PERSON AND CHARACTER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

JOHN vi. 63.

It is the Spirit that quickeneth.

THE word Spirit, in this text, is probably used, by a figure, for the effect of the Spirit. The Saviour had told his disciples, certainly, highly mysterious truths, which they did not understand; and he now tells them, the reason was that they did not look at their *spirituality.* "It is the Spirit, (said he) that *quickeneth;* the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." That is, they are *spiritual*—the effect of the Holy Spirit—and, therefore, to be understood in a spiritual sense.

This putting the gifts of the Spirit for the Spirit itself, is a very common usage in scripture. We conceive, therefore, that we shall do no violence to the text, by considering it,

in its highest sense, as expressive of an important view, which may be taken of the *Holy Spirit itself*—the third person of the sacred Trinity.

There is certainly a vein of description, running through the sacred scriptures, with respect to the Holy Spirit, which is truly remarkable. I mean this: that they give to the Holy Spirit a distinct province of operation, in almost every thing that belongs to God, and upon which almost every thing that is comely and active is made to depend. Yet is that vein of description, in some measure, a concealed one: the subject it describes lies deep. I have often compared it to the origin of motion in machinery the agent is out of sight, while its operations are seen every where. So is it with the Holy Spirit: it pervades every thing, and is yet invisible, except by its effects. We must *trace these operations, therefore, in order to learn His character;* and this is the leading object of the present lecture. May the Spirit of truth, Himself, direct us, and then we shall not err!

We observe, *first*, then, that we find an important department of operation assigned to the Holy Spirit, in the WORK OF CREATION. "In the beginning God created the heaven

and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the *Spirit* of God moved upon the face of the waters." Here, in the first chapter of the Bible, we begin to discover what that distinct and important province of operation is, which is assigned to the third person of the Trinity. God speaks the world into existence: and the earth is without form, and void; and darkness is upon the face of the deep: but the *Spirit moves*, or *broods*, as the original word is, upon the face of the waters. Here, then, is it seen, according to our text, that the appropriate department of this Spirit, is to *give life, and light, and order, and beauty, to the works of God.* It was so in creation: "By his Spirit he garnished the heavens." And we shall find it to be so in all the other works of God. Let it be borne in mind, as we pass along, that our object is *to find this appropriate department of the Holy Spirit, and to learn thence his proper character.*

II. Something of this kind is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, IN THE PROVIDENTIAL UPHOLDING AND PRESERVING OF GOD'S CREATURES. In the 104th Psalm, David is describing the works and providence of God; and he represents all creatures as receiving their sus-

tenance and being, with all its changes, from Him. "That thou givest them," says he, "they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." What, then, is it that supports a dying creation? What shall revive the changes of revolving nature, when all is dead and inactive? The next verse answers: "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth." Here the agency of the Spirit of God is seen in its appropriate operations again, *re-creating* that to which he gave life, and order, and beauty, in the *first* creation.

III. We find these operations thirdly, and much more at large, IN THE WORKS OF REDEMPTION. And here,

1. He is seen to bear a part in the *eternal covenant of redemption.* Peter speaks of Christ, as given by covenant, *before the foundation of the world.* (Acts ii. 23, and 1 Pet. i. 20.) But when God speaks of this covenant, or gift of Christ, he includes the agreement of the Holy Ghost in it. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my SPIRIT upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the

Gentiles." (Isai. xlii 1.) Moreover, as the Holy Ghost is every where represented as being a separate and Divine agency, in carrying this covenant into effect, it is strongly infered, that he must have given his assent to the covenant itself. How, otherwise, could his co-operation have been promised. (See also Heb. x. 29. But let us look at the carrying into effect of this covenant; and here the Holy Spirit is seen,

2. *To inspire holy men to write the book of revelation.* "For the prophecy came not in old time, by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. i. 21.)

3. *To anoint, or sanctify the Saviour.* "The *Spirit* of the Lord God is upon me, *because* the Lord hath *anointed* me, to preach good tidings." (Isai. lxi. 1.) This anointing orsetting apart of the Saviour, did, indeed, more formally take place, when he had come in the flesh, and was initiated into his ministry, by his baptism, and the descent of the Holy Ghost. But, the Old Testament saints, had a Saviour in the types and promises, and visible appearances of the second person, on certain occasions; in all which, the meaning of the types, sealing of the promises, and the mission of the Son, must be considered as

falling within the province of the Spirit's operations. Even then, the Saviour could say, "And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me." (Isai. xlviii. 16.) We find the presence of this Spirit again, *at the incarnation of Christ.* Said the angel to Mary, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, aslo, that holy THING, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."

4. And not only in this, but in relation to *men*, do we find this Spirit's operations. Them He *enlightens:* "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth," for "He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John xvi. 13, 14. He *convicts:* "He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (8th verse.) He *regenerates:* "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (iii. 5.) He *sanctifies:* "Chosen to salvation through SANCTIFICATION of the SPIRIT, and belief of the truth. (2 Thes. ii. 13.)

AGAIN: He is the *Comforter* of God's people. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the SPIRIT of truth." (John xv. 26.) He

bears witness to truth. "The Spirit also bears witness with our spirit," says Paul, (Rom. viii. 16,) "that we are the children of God;" and thus giving us the grace of strong assurance, he is said to *seal* us to the day of redemption. "And grieve not the SPIRIT of God, whereby ye are SEALED to the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.)

5. This Spirit has also appropriate offices, in relation to the *church collectively.* He *anoints and sends forth her ministers.* "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the *Holy Ghost* said, separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them." (Acts xiii. 2.)

As we have seen, he *begets her spiritual children*, and is the author, more especially, of those stupendous displays of Almighty grace, *when a large number of dead sinners are awakened and regenerated together.* "Tarry ye at Jerusalem," was the direction given to the apostles, "until the Spirit be poured out upon you from on high;" and those who obeyed this command, tarried not long, until the Spirit, under the sensible symbols of a rushing wind, and of cloven tongues of fire, filled all the place where they were sitting. (See Acts ii.)

And *finally*, the Spirit is represented as the immediate author of *all those gifts and spiritual*

graces; whereby the church is *edified*, built up, comforted, established in assurance, and eventually made meet for the marriage supper of the Lamb. "To one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one, and the self-same Spirit;" and this is wrought, as you perceive, just below, for edifying *the body of Christ*. (See 1 Cor. xii. 8, and onward.)

It is in reference to these multifarious and appropriate gifts of the Spirit, that he is also called by many other names in scripture. Did our limits permit, we might refer you to the scriptures, where is called *Spirit of life; Spirit of truth; Spirit of grace; Spirit of adoption; Spirit of might; Spirit of promise; law, voice, guide, teacher, love, power*, and many others; all which go to show what a fulness of description the scriptures give to this person, and the important, life-giving, and all sustaining influence, which is ascri-

bed to him, in every department of God's works.

Before proceeding, however, to deduce the character of the Holy Spirit, from all that has now been quoted respecting him, we must refer you to a few of those passages, which speak of him *without a reference to his appropriate offices*. And here we find,

1. That the scriptures call him *God* and *Lord*, without the least hesitation. "The Lord is that Spirit." (2 Cor. iii. 17.) "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." (Acts v. 4.) Compare, also, Acts xxviii. 25, with Isaiah vi. 9; Hebrews iii. 7—9, with Exodus xvii. 7; and John i. 13, with John iii. 5. Observe with what entire carelessness, so to speak, the names of God and Lord are indiscriminately given to the Spirit and to the Deity.

2. With the same fulness, do the scriptures ascribe the *Divine attributes* to the Spirit. In texts already quoted, you have seen *creating* and *upholding power* assigned to him, *knowledge to teach all things*, *regenerating efficiency*, *the power of miracles*, *and the ability to sanctify and preserve* and *seal* his church unto the day of redemption. He is *an object of worship*, for equal honour is ascribed to him, with the Father and the Son, in the *baptismal ser-*

vice, and the *apostolic benediction ;* and finally, to enumerate only one more attribute, *he is eternal ;* and if he is eternal, it is altogether unnecessary to say that all the other attributes of Deity belong to him of course. But he certainly is eternal : He *assisted* in the creation of all things, and what is that which existed before the creation of all things but *eternal ?* And in Hebrews ix. 14, it is expressly said, that " *Christ, through the* ETERNAL SPIRIT, *offered himself without spot, to God.*"

From all these scriptures, we are at length prepared to give our view of the character of the Holy Spirit. We say then, *in the first place*, that it appears incontrovertibly from these scriptures, THAT THE SPIRIT POSSESSES THE SUPREME NATURE OF GOD. He is not inferior or created ; but properly *Divine.* You heard him called God and Lord, without the least hesitation ; you heard works, and worship, and attributes ascribed to him, which do not and cannot belong to any but the Supreme Being. Now, if creative power do not prove that he who exercises it is God, how shall we prove that our God is better than the idols, who " have *not* made the heavens ?" If a Being, who was *eternal* be not God, we would be glad to learn when it was

discovered that there is more than one infinite being, and how they both existed together from eternity?

It appears to me next to impossible that any person, who receives the Bible as the word of revelation, can really doubt whether the Holy Spirit possesses the divine nature—that such descriptions of him as are here given should be sincerely received, and yet He be supposed only an inferiour and created Being. But I am inclined to think that this last view of Him is not often taken. Most persons, who admit that the Holy Spirit is any being, admit that he is a divine being. The more common misapprehension, probably, is that which denies his personality—not supposing him a real Being, but rather *a mere influence.* I know not whether I understand what is meant by calling the Spirit of God *a mere influence.*. I know well enough what is meant by *denying* the *personality* of the Spirit; for it is much easier to deny a doctrine than to propound its opposite. But what is meant by saying that the Spirit of God is a mere influence? If it be meant that the Spirit is an *attribute* of God, I ask *which* attribute? Is it his *power*, his *wisdom*, his *eternity*, or any other attribute? We have proved that the Spirit possesses *all* these in himself. Now, as a

divine person, it is perfectly consistent that he should possess all these; but if he were an *attribute*, he must be some *one* attribute, and then how can he be another?

If it be meant that the Spirit is an *influence*, which God puts into some creatures, as wisdom and holiness and other communicable attributes are sometimes put into men; if this be meant, I deny it altogether; for this Spirit has *incommunicable* attributes, and these can never be given to a creature. The Holy Spirit may give wisdom and other gifts, as he did in communicating the gift of tongues; but that he is himself that very gift, and dwells in all his fulness in the creature, seems to me, not only to confound the gift with the giver, but to make that giver a finite and limited being.

Is it then meant, by calling the Spirit a mere influence, *that he is the same as God*—his own Spirit breathed forth, and thus operating in various departments of his works? This last, as far as it goes, we believe; but still have to ask whether it is conceded, that this Spirit is *really God;* whether he is a person in the divine God-head? We cannot conceive of parts in God, as we can of ourselves, when we speak of spirit and body. God is *all* Spirit, and we wish to learn what

is meant by allowing that the Spirit is God's Spirit, and yet denying his personality. Here then, at length, we come to the point.

Second. We believe, that the *Holy Spirit is not only Divine, but really a person in the God-head :* tha the stands, and acts, and feels as a Divine person in the God-head—as much so as the Father or the Son : *possessing some properties, which are not common, indeed, to them as persons ; but yet one God with them, as agreeing in all their essence.*

If we can make this out, it will be all we care further to establish, and all that need to be established, in oppisition to erroneous notions on this very serious subject. And does it not appear, that the Holy Spirit is a separate person in the Deity ?

1. From those instances in which he *assumed a bodily shape.* When Christ was baptized, the Spirit descended upon him in *the form of a dove.* (See Math. iii. 16, 17.) This dove was the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost we have proved to be Divine. Now was this appearance no distinction in the God-head ? when we hear the Father from *heaven* speaking at the same time and saying, " This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." So also, in the descent of the Holy Ghost, at Penticost. (Acts ii.)

Here the form assumed, was that *of cloven tongues of fire;* and we read, that "they all began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Is there no difference between the Holy Spirit, and mere influences in this case, when it is said that this Holy Spirit *gave* those influences?

2. My next proof of the personality of the Spirit, is those passages where the *Spirit*, though Divine, *is still distinguished from God.* Speaking of the church, Paul says, "there is one body and one Spirit—one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Eph. iv. 4, 5.) "Your body," says he to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. vi. 19,) "is the temple of the Holy Ghost—which ye have of God." And once more, (John xv. 26,) Christ speaks of the *Comforter*, which *he* will *send* unto them from the *Father.* Here all the three persons are named, with the *plainest* distinction, and in the order of their *personal* relation; and what can this be, if each is Divine, but the distinction for which we contend?

3. But my last and strongest proof, that the Spirit is a person in the Trinity, is those passages where he is not only distinguished from the Father and the Son, *but mentioned and worshipped with equal honour.* "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name

of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." Now what possible theory can make this language consistent, if it be not that each of these names denotes a person, and that each person is Divine? They are certainly *distinguished;* for we cannot suppose the inspiration of God meant merely to say to us—baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the *influence* of the Father! What is this but saying the same thing over again? Nor can we, dare we, make a difference in their *dignity* here, for they are all mentioned, with precisely the *same honour*, and all worshipped in a solemn act of devotion.

There are many other proofs of the personality of the Spirit, such as that he is spoken of as one capable of being *grieved:* that *personal* pronouns are applied to him, and in plain language: that we read of *blaspheming* against him beyond forgiveness, while, at the same time, another person of the Trinity is spoken of, against whom blasphemies committed, *may* be forgiven.

The above proofs, however, are sufficient, and we have no desire to enlarge them.

I cannot forbear, however, to add one

passage, extremely expressive. In Romans viii. 26, the Spirit is said to make intercession for the saints, according to the will of God; and why is it that all the prayers which the Spirit moves, are according to the will of God? The next verse answers: It is because "He who searcheth the heart," which is God certainly, "knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit." Here are certainly the actings of two existences, and yet they are represented as knowing each other perfectly, and acting in perfect concert, as one Being.

It is evident, then, from all that has now been considered, that the Holy Spirit must be conceived of as possessing, in some sense, a *two fold* character. He possesses the supreme nature of God, and therefore is often spoken of as the same with Jehovah. His name is interchanged with this great name, and this great name with his, without reference to his official department of operations. This is what we mean by the *first* view of his nature. In other passages, his *appropriate operations* are spoken of, such as relate to his part in *creation*, *providence*, and *redemption*. In these, he is put in the third order of offices in the Trinity, as if, in this respect, he was inferior; as when he is said to be *sent* and

to *proceed* from the Father and the Son. In both the views, however, he is, as we have seen, still Divine; and the nature of the case requires that we consider him as a *person.*

If you now ask whether it is proper to say the Holy Spirit is God and worship him as such? I say yes, certainly; for inspired men have called him God, and worshipped him as God before you; and they did it properly, for he really possesses the supreme nature. But you do not worship him as *another* God. Always remember, that when you worship the Spirt, or the Son, or the Father, you are worshipping the *same God.* The same supreme nature, dwelling in each of these persons; in one word, according to all we have attempted to establish, it is the infinite God, existing by a distinction of *three persons* in *one essence.*

We feel now, that the latter part of our general proposition, made sometime since, is at length established, to wit: that *the one God, not only exists by a distinction of persons, called Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but that while each of these persons possesses some properties, not common to the others, they do all, nevertheless, possess the Divine nature, the one as much so as the other.*

As this finishes our whole subject, so far

as it is *doctrinally* considered, we shall pause here for the present, and only request you—if disposed to study the subject further—always to observe *two* cautions.

The *first* caution is, *to remember that we know but little, and can know but little on such a subject.* A fine writer has represented man, as holding a middle state of being, between nothing and infinity. "His mind," says he, "holds the same rank in the order of intelligent beings, as his body does in the extent of nature." So far our author; and we draw this inference from him: that man is as far removed from a full knowledge of God, as his body is from the bulk of the universe. As rationally might he expect to stretch himself over all worlds, as to comprehend the infinite Deity. We know then just so much of God's mode of existence, as he has revealed to us—nothing more. But it is not to be imagined, that he has revealed every thing that relates to himself; oh no: it is *a part of his ways;* but the depths of his vast essence *who can understand?* How evident is it then, that we must take what God has written of himself just as it stands, and rely upon it with great simplicity, not expecting to go farther than he has written, or call that in question because we can see no more!

I suppose I am as proud of my reason as another man—I thank God for it, and believe I ought to exercise it in studying the scriptures. But I would always bear in mind the proper province of reason: its business is to examine the *evidence* of God's having spoken to us, and when it is satisfied of that, to learn what is the *meaning* of his sayings. When it has got thus far, it has done. Where God is the subject, an angel's intellect can go no farther; and I confess, brethren, when I have any right views here, I feel that any other, rather than a bold, speculating and presumptuous language becomes me.

The next caution I have to suggest, is that you always study this subject, if you study it at all, *with prayer*. Never dare to launch into such an abyss, without a petition that the Holy Ghost, whose province it is to give wisdom, would make it light to you; yes, and keep you too from plunging too deeply. I do think I have experienced the benefit of this precaution myself. I have read of its once having reclaimed a distinguished Socinian from error; that he began to read the New Testament with a prayer, that the Spirit would illuminate his mind every time he opened the sacred volume. This was the assigned means of his conversion; and how many other

unhappy wanderers, such a course as I have now recommended might have saved from the depths of delusion, it is not for me to determine.

The remaining parts of this subject will be wholly practical, and those must be omitted till another occasion.

Now may the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, direct and bless us. Amen.

LECTURE VI.

THE DOCTRINES OF A TRINITY APPLIED.

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2 THESSALONIANS ii. 16.

And hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope, through grace.

Let us at length hear the conclusion of the whole matter. We have seen that there is a Trinity of persons in the God-head, and that each of these persons properly possesses the Divine nature; but of what avail is all this abundance of revelation, and for what just reason has been our discussion of it, unless it can be shown that God's glory and our own interest are involved in it? We trust it will be made to appear that they are: at all events, it will now be attempted; and we feel a pleasing confidence that those who have thus far seemed to love the truth for its own sake, will not be less attentive, when their dearest interests, when the beauty of God's character, and their own immortal hopes, are to be discovered in it.

I. We think we can discover then, *that the doctrine we have been defending*, EXHIBITS A GLORY, NOT OTHERWISE DISCOVERABLE IN THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

We speak not here, though we might perhaps, of the relation which such a distinction of the God-head may have to His own essential happiness. It is certain, that the persons of the Holy Trinity are represented as dwelling together, speaking to each other, and enjoying a high and ineffably holy communion. Now, what relation this may have to the independent happiness of Deity, what of essential glory was thus provided for in the eternal ages of God's sole existence, or what of any other perfection, we do not pretend to determine. It is one of those subjects on which little is revealed, and where the deepest reverence becomes us. We do think, however, that we can see something of it. This distinction is a perfection—we are sure it is, because it exists, and we think we can see it to be so. Let us come then to its effect on *God's declarative glory ;* and here we remark,

1. That the doctrine exhibits *a beautiful order and harmony in Deity.* In every important operation, and in the display of every well planned scheme, order and agreement

are of the first consequence. We all know their advantage in carrying on a complicated labour. Every department must there have its proper agent; and yet must there be the most perfect harmony—a common motion and a common object.

It may perhaps be objected, that we ought not to apply such a comparison to God's mode of existence. There is nothing imperious in it, however, if we do not thereby propose fully to explain that existence, but only to show of what an infinitely superiour harmony he is the author. We say, then, that the beauty and advantages of this principle of order may be found in God, as existing by a Trinity of persons. For each of these persons has appropriate offices attributed him in the works of God. In the work of creation, for instance, it is the property of the Father, as such, to *preside and will its existence :* it is the property of the Son to *create*, and of the Spirit to *brood on the abyss*, and reduce creation to order. So also, and more strikingly, does this order obtain in the works of redemption. It is the property of the *Father*, as such, to *give and send* his Son : the *Son's*, to come in obedience, and to make himself a sacrifice, in order to provide pardon and reconciliation; and it is

the province of the Holy Spirit to *apply* these benefits in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner. But in all these operations, it was necessary that the most perfect *harmony* should be preserved; and this is also provided for, in that these several persons are one in essence still, as God. We have then, in this distinction, the superiour advantage over any other conception of Deity, that it distributes his works—all of which are such as to require Divine agency in the most appropriate order—and yet makes the whole harmonious. We remark,

2. That a provision is found in this distinction, *for displaying the force and sanctity of certain attributes of Deity more fully than they otherwise could have been displayed.* We will suppose, for instance, it had been revealed to us, aside from any idea of this distinction, that God was perfectly just and perfectly merciful—could we, I ask, have ever entered in the conception how rigid that justice is, and how great that mercy, as we now do, in having heard that God gave his equal Son to die for sinners? The fact is, my brethren, that we feel but little what God's perfections are, by simply hearing them announced: we need to see them illustrated; and now I take it upon me to say, that, as far as yet ap-

pears, God could not, in any other way, have made such an exhibition of the attributes just mentioned, as he has made, in giving his Son for a ransom. Had he, for instance, declared an act of amnesty at once, and pardoned sinners without a ransom, we think that justice not only would have been less gloriously exhibited, but that it would have been destroyed ; and had he given any *other* ransom—a created being, or all created beings together—we speak not now of the impossibility of their making atonement—but we say if they could have made it, the sanctity of God's attributes had not been as fully illustrated. But he gave, as you know, his equal Son, and in that gift, oh how do justice and mercy meet and magnify each other !

We might carry round this illustration to many other attributes of Deity. In *sending* his Son, God set an example of authority—in the *coming* of the Son, is a perfect example of obedience. In the energizing operations of the Spirit, the idea of God's omnipotence is brought nearer to us. In the humiliation of the Son, we see his condescension as we could never otherwise have seen it ; and his omnipresence is strikingly illustrated, by his speaking of himself as in heaven, while he was yet on earth. The harmony of all these

perfections is, nevertheless, secured, as before illustrated. But all this mode of exhibition, you need not be told, depends on the distinctions of a Trinity.

3. We shall observe only one other use of the Trinity, in its relation to God's declarative glory. It serves, we think, *to bring that glory down to the apprehension of men, in the only way in which it was possible for them to behold it.* It seems to be an established principle, in God's existence, that no man may see him at any time and live. Yet God has been continually exhibiting himself, in one appearance or other, to his creatures; and the same scripture explains this apparent contradiction, by saying, that "the only begotten Son, who dwelleth in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him." It is accordingly made certain, either by the connexion of the passages themselves, or by their quotation in the New Testament, that all those appearances of God to men, recorded in the Old Testament, were appearances of the Son of God, called frequently *God's angel and the angel of the covenant.* Thus, to particularize only a few instances, it was *Jehovah Jesus* who spoke to Moses in the bush, for so it is understood, as related by Stephen. (Acts vii. 30—32.) It was *Jehovah Jesus* who re-

proved the people at *Bochim;* (Judges .ii 1) for he is here called an *angel*, and yet, says he, "*I* made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers." And it is expressly said to be Jesus, who appeared unto John in Patmos, with such uncreated glory; and he is there called "the first and the last, the Almighty." (Rev. i. 8, 17.)

Now there is some good reason, no doubt, why God has so uniformly displayed himself to men, in the person of his Son; and as far as we can see, it appears to be this: It conveys a higher thought of the dignity of God, that he will not suffer himself to be seen by men, except through a mediator; and it is a merciful condescension, whereby his glories are thus softened down and brought nearer to the capacities of his creatures. Were God's unveiled glories to open upon us without this medium, we have reason to believe they would consume us as in a moment. The hidden splendour of his essential essence has never yet been conceived by mortals, and perhaps it never will be; but in the person of his Son, assuming the form of an angel, or of a man, his mitigated glories have been seen, and enough in this way has appeared to command our adoration.

But this comely and appropriate vision of God is fully dependent, as before, on the distinctions of the God-head. We hope the assertion has now been justified, that the glory of God's character is concerned in this doctrine. Let us see,

II. WHETHER ALL OUR HOPES FOR IMMORTALITY ARE NOT DEPENDENT ON IT.

In order to this, let us look at man as his case stood before God at the moment of the fall, and as it now stands with every fallen sinner, until he receives the Saviour. He is fallen, depraved, ignorant, helpless and guilty. The condemning sentence of a righteous law is on him—he has no power to escape it—he is conscious of the justice of his doom, and his darkness leaves him no discovery of a way in which his punishment can be avoided. Here then we begin to discover the need of a Redeemer; and

1. *To interpose at that moment*, in virtue of some eternal engagement made on man's behalf, *to save him from the immediate effects of justice.* Had such an interposition not been made, we see no way in which guilty man could have been spared, or creation saved from destruction, for one hour, after the fall. We learn, accordingly, that it was then made, and what we have particularly to observe of

the transaction just now, is the appropriate provision which then existed for such an interposition in the truths we are explaining. The first thought connected with the notion of a mediator is that of parties, between whom mediation is effected. If then there was an interposition between man and his Maker, by another divine person, as early as the fall, it could only be in virtue of these distinctions of the God-head.

2. *But man is darkened and in ignorance also.* God is now considered as pitying his case, and beginning to make provision for it: he wills not, then, that his creatures should remain ignorant of himself, or the way of his proposed redemption. Ignorant of it man must forever remain, however, without a revelation. Deity, in his essential essence, it seems, cannot come near enough to human apprehension for this object, and hence arises another appropriate office for the persons of the Trinity. The Son of God becomes *a prophet to his people*, and begins, even in Eden, to announce the mind and promises of Jehovah. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Build ye an altar, and offer bloody sacrifices with faith in the atonement they typify. But the Holy Spirit, as well as the Son, is rep-

resented as conveying the mind of God to men, and this seems to be the distinction between their prophetic offices. When revelation was to be made by impressions on the minds of men, as in the larger portions of our written word, it was by the agency of the Holy Spirit; for "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" but when this revelation was made by sensible apparitions, then it was, always, as we have before seen, made by the Son of God, who is therefore called the *prophet* of his people.

How important this use of the distinctions in the Trinity, my brethren, if we once consider that, without it, we should have remained for ever destitute of any saving knowledge. Spiritual ignorance is one of the first fruits of sin; and it seems perfectly certain, that without such a revelation as we have mentioned, all knowledge of God, and duty, and salvation, had been excluded from our minds.

3. Let us look at this doctrine once more, *in its relation to the government of God's people.* In such a state as we have contemplated, they surely need a Governor; but none but a Divine Being, if you consider in what the church is to be ruled and defended, would be competent to that government, and you accordingly hear it said expressly, "*that God*

is King himself." But this government, it seems, required, in many instances, God's visible presence among his people; and such a presence, we have already seen, could only be through a Mediator. The Mediator it was, accordingly, who appeared to give laws in Zion. He was seen in the garden as a *Judge*—he was seen at Sinai as a *Law-giver*—he presided through all the journeyings of Israel as a *Defender*, and ere they finally possessed their rest, stood before them at Jordan as *Captain* of the armies of the Lord.

It would not be difficult to show that he *rules* in a similar manner for Zion now; and it would afford entertaining thoughts for the believer to trace him, as his and Jerusalem's King, through all the militant state. But when you do so, brethren, remember it is only as a person in the God-head that such a ruler is provided.

4. *The right view of an atonement, or a proper satisfaction for sin and a sufficient righteousness for sinners*, is wholly dependent on the truth of this doctrine. Particularly is this true, in relation to the character now given of the Lord Jesus Christ, and because the subject is of the first importance, we shall devote a more particular attention to it.

We say then, according to the principles

of God's government and character, which are disclosed in the plan of redemption adopted by him, it does appear, that no other character, than that which has been given to the second person of the *Trinity*, could ever have made an adequate atonement for sinners. This is not the same as saying, that God could not have devised another method, though we confess we cannot *see* it possible: nor is it the same as it would have been for us to judge beforehand on what should be necessary. But it is a judgment arising from the principles disclosed to us in this very transaction, and a judgment which goes to say that this method of saving sinners being adopted, none but just such a character as is now given to Jesus Christ is competent to it. What then are the principles disclosed in this transaction, and how is the character now given to Jesus Christ found competent to their requirements?

We answer: it appears incontrovertibly, *that God would have a satisfaction for his violated law;* and that to be a satisfaction, it must be full and perfect. For the fact that God gave his Son, whatever the character of that Son be now supposed, proves that he was not willing to pass over transgression *without* a satisfaction; and that the satisfaction must

be full and complete, appears, not only from the nature of justice, but from this also, that if a part could be dispensed with, a greater part might—and then a greater still, until the exaction might have been omitted altogether.

It appears in this transaction too, that *man could never have made* this satisfaction. It is a satisfaction for *another ;* but man, even in holiness, owed all his obedience for himself: how much less then, in his fallen state, shall he be able to work redemption, when ignorance, and weakness, and continual sin, are daily augmenting his difficulties ?

It appears, once more, from these transactions, that God is so holy and awfully retired from his creatures, especially from his fallen creatures, that *he will not let himself down, or be approached by them, without the intervention of a Mediator.*

These are the difficulties disclosed. Let us see now how they are all met in the character and office which we have given to the Redeemer. He can interpose between God and man, with acceptance to both parties, for we have proved him to possess the nature of both : he can make a satisfaction to God's law for another, by putting himself under it, for he neither owes obedience nor penalty

to that law for himself; and he can make a full and perfect satisfaction, in as much as he is an infinite being, and has joined that perfection to a nature in which it was possible for him to suffer.

Thus is every requirement, in order to redemption, provided for in this view of the Saviour's character, and it is not provided for on any other view. If you make him a man, it might be asked why he was given at all? Why not Adam, or any other sinner, make his own atonement as well as this man? If you make him a sinless man, your difficulties are not removed, for then he owes all his obedience for himself; and if you carry up his dignity to that of an angel, or the highest of all created beings, these difficulties still follow you: the moment you admit a created being, he comes under God's law—he owes it all his obedience every moment, with all his soul and strength, for his own sake; and how shall he do more than that, to make obedience for another—and what right has he to do it? *How shall a created being become a surety?* You have this besides to dispose of, that no created being has ever ye possessed a two fold nature, and of course could not be a proper Mediator between God and man; and this still further, that

the satisfaction which any created being could make to a broken law, could never, as we have seen it must be, be an infinite satisfaction. So essentially connected with all consistent views of the atonement is the doctrine we have advanced respecting the character of a Redeemer. It is its very vitality—it gloriously provides for every thing ; and without it, I hesitate not to say, that nothing is provided for.

In urging our *second position*, that the doctrine of a Trinity is essentially connected with our immortal hopes, we might go much further—and perhaps theological correctness would require we should go further than this, and speak of the offices of the Holy Spirit also. These are no less important, nor do they less essentially depend on the distinctions of a God-head, than those which have been considered. We are willing to close here, however. Enough, perhaps, has been said of each of the persons ; and with the necessity of just such a Saviour as we worship, distinctly before us, we shall be best prepared for a suitable application of the subject.

Need it be wondered, I ask then, if, with such views before us, we *should give incalculable importance to the doctrine of a Trinity ?*

We have before proved that it exists; and we have to day attempted to show its uses. The glory of God's character, and our own immortal hopes, have been seen to be concerned in it; and with respect to the latter especially, we saw that an *interposition* for fallen man—a *revelation of God's will*—the *government of his church*, and the possible expiation and righteousness of a single sinner, could in no other way be provided. All these offices we have seen depending on the distinction of persons in the God-head; but to shut the last door against misapprehension, I add once more, that we ascribe none of these offices to a person in the Trinity, *aside from God.* These persons all agree in one, and it is, therefore, all the work of Deity.

I now ask again, can it be wondered at, that we attach so much consequence to this doctrine? We might answer abstractly, that we have attached no more consequence to it than the Scriptures have done—for they have guarded every portion of it with something like an anathama. (See Math. iv. 10. John. v. 23, and Math. xii. 32.) But we offer our reasons: The doctrine exhibits a glory unseen without it, in the character of God; and all our hopes,

as fallen sinners, are involved in its application. We hesitate not to say, that the notion of a satisfaction for sin, and salvation by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is, without this doctrine, an entire absurdity. Not but men may *talk* of such a righteousness without it, and be in the habit of ascribing glory to Christ, and even worshipping him, where it is denied, and perhaps, through ignorance, do all this sincerely. But this cannot *consistently* be done: properly considered, it would be as absurd to give the work of atonement to Christ—to worship him, or to ask any thing in his name, if he were not a divine and uncreated being, as it would to make a man our Saviour, or to deny our need of one altogether.

The latter has been the course usually adopted accordingly, by all reflecting unbelievers in the Divinity of our Saviour. Those who have reduced that denial to a system, have had the sagacity to see that it is utterly inconsistent with the admission that God's justice requires a satisfaction—that man is fully depraved, or needs a regenerating change: they fully deny, accordingly, all these positions. They refuse to worship Christ—they do not baptize in his name, or ask blessings for his sake; and as to the

new birth, they scout it as altogether ideal. Dreadful as this is, it is consistent, a thousand times more so, than to make Christ a created being, and still to retain experimental religion, and seek it in his name. The reason is, that the admission of one is inconsistent with the necessity of the other. And though we do not urge to it, we venture to predict, that the time will come, when all, who deny the doctrine of a Trinity, will take the same ground. Such sects cannot endure long, without being reduced to system; and if ever reduced to system by reflecting men, they must reject all these important points of doctrine.

But it is time to close. I wish my hearers to feel, that in all they know or affirm of God —that every time they address him in the name of Christ—that in every baptism—that in all they say or hold of salvation by grace, they involve and admit the doctrine of a Trinity. But they do not admit too much, since this doctrine is every where taught in the Bible; nor do they admit that, I trust, in which they feel no interest. Surely, if I may judge others by myself, it has been pleasant to examine a subject, where so much and so great a variety of sacred truth is elicited; a broad and beautiful foundation

of all other truth is found too—*a good hope through grace* is erected upon it—and never ending praises to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are seen to be due for the mercy.

The Lord grant us all an interest in this hope, without which all our speculations, and doctrinal correctness, will only enhance our misery. Amen.

LECTURE VII.

THE ORIGINAL AND PRESENT STATE OF MAN.

ECCLESIASTES vii. 29.

Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright ; but they have sought out many inventions.

We have only to look candidly at the nature and condition of man, to be convinced that he was not always what he now is. At present, his natural condition is sufficiently unhappy. All around him you find a world filled with tokens of some signal calamity. The earth yawns in caverns and impenitrable wastes : the heavens are filled with tempests and disease : his own body is the seat of consuming decay : fierce passions discompose his soul ; and, unbridled in the hands of power and ambition, spread want, and oppression, and cruelty throughout the world. Now, if there be any such thing as a presiding Providence, and you would not impeach the justice or the wisdom of that Provi-

dence, it is natural to regard this state of things as the punishment of guilt. There are many natural intimations, accordingly, that such was not always the condition of this world. Rocks must have been entire before they could have been rent—and trees, and swamps, and barren soils, must have been thrifty and fruitful before they became the subjects of decay.

You have similar intimations in the constitution of man. His occasional flashes of genius intimate the ruins of fallen intellect : his aspiring desires and his delicate social affections, without implying any qualities that partake of holiness, do, nevertheless, seem to remind us of what he once was—a being of nobler powers, and made for a better state of existence.

Why is it, moreover, if this supposition be not correct, that the philosophy of heathenism has so universally supposed a primitive state of innocence and happiness ? It may be that the sentiment was borrowed from tradition ; but the fact is unquestionable. In their writings they allude to an age of *brass*, in opposition to what they call the present or age of *iron :* farther back than that, they tell of an age of *silver ;* and finally, of an age of

gold, when the earth was free from every evil, and men were innocent and happy.

So many intimations, pointing to the same result, assure us that the moral and natural condition of man was once different, with as much certainty as the existence of sea-shells on the tops of mountains assures the naturalist that all these mountains were once the bed of the ocean.

Opening now the pages of revelation, what was before obscure is made clear. All our suppositions on this subject are confirmed. Such a *primitive condition of innocence and happiness* is authoritatively asserted: the *causes of change* are explained, and the *present state of man*, morally and naturally considered, is also taught us.

These are the truths then, to which I shall now direct your attention. And

I. OF THE ORIGINAL CONDITION OF MAN.

The scriptural account of this is very simple and yet expressive. God made them male and female, *in the image of God created He them.* (Gen. i. 27.) By this, we are undoubtedly to understand that there was a resemblance in all the moral attributes of man to those of his Maker; and what higher description than this can you have of perfect holiness? Man was like

God in every possible perfection, as far as a created can be like an uncreated being. His mind was pure, elastic and aspiring—his affections, all warmed with gratitude and love. were fixed on their proper object—his will, conformed to the Divine will, knew no tendencies to leave the track of duty. Every faculty of the creature was perfectly hallowed and harmonious with other faculties, and a raised, improving, and heavenly tendency was constantly given to the whole.

And as man was holy, *so was he happy.* Many of the properties we have mentioned did indeed, of themselves, partake of happiness; but it was thus ordered also, as the reward of virtue. God so placed man as to secure happiness. Our simple, but expressive description of holy writ, is, that it was in a garden, where the Lord God caused "to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life, also, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. ii. 9.) This description implies much more than it expresses. It tells us that man, in innocence, was altogether free from every natural evil, as well as in possession of every temporal good; and then, since many of these objects in the garden are known to be

typical, it directs us to those spiritual enjoyments, of which he was now, in so high a degree, a recipient.

There, in a literal sense, the tree of life bent with never failing fruit: there the river of life flowed through the midst of the garden: there every wind of heaven murmured in soft and gentle harmony: there the infant sun shot his best rays. There, then, was labour without toil—and rest without exhaustion: there beast, and fowl, and reptile, mingled free of fear to man, or animosity to each other: there was social love, without its weakness and its defects: there every work of wonder and of wisdom, gave a heavenward direction to the adoring soul of man; and God himself, in consideration of that moral similitude which existed between him and his creature, did not deem it unmeet to descend and visit man—walking with him often, in the person of his Son, and filling his infant mind with all of heaven it was capable of receiving.

In this state God made a covenant with man: It was what is commonly called *the covenant of works;* because the conditions of it were perfect obedience with the penalty of death for forfeiture. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden

thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. ii. 16, 17.)

There are two considerations in favour of considering this covenant as containing *a promise of eternal life.* The one is, that the permission to eat of the tree of life would probably have secured immortality: man was prevented eating of this tree after his fall, *lest he should live forever;* and this leads us to suppose that the fruit of this tree had something of virtue in it, either in its nature, or by God's special appointment, to prevent death.

The other consideration is, that death was threatened for disobedience; but every covenant is reciprocal, and life seems, therefore, the proper condition of obedience.

The penalty of death, for disobedience, on the other hand, is generally believed to imply, not merely natural death, but that also which was *spiritual and eternal.* Spiritual death would certainly follow, on the removal of the image of God; and then death eternal must necessarily succeed. The condemnation of the law, under which the sinner

would fall, knows no limits—moreover, "*the wages of sin is death.*"

These, then, we believe to have been the terms of the covenant; and this completes the original condition of man. He is holy, happy—fully happy, in the midst of every natural and moral delight. All this is promised to be continued and improved, on condition of his obedience: all is lost, forfeited and changed, if he disobey. Never was creature more blest: never did created being hold so responsible a station. We behold the constitution of a world—the moral and natural condition of unnumbered millions, now pending on an individual obedience.

II. But this state of primitive glory and happiness has been lost. Let us now CONTEMPLATE THE CAUSE AND MANNER OF THE CHANGE.

The scriptural account is, that our first parents disobeyed and broke this covenant. At the suggestions of Satan, concealed in the form of a serpent, they indulged the principles of unbelief, pride and rebellion, and ate of that tree, which was selected and prohibited as a test of their obedience. How minds, which were perfectly holy, could thus be made to preponderate in favour of sin, we cannot easily conceive; but we

are sure of the fact ; and after all, it involves no greater difficulty than every other moral change which is wrought upon a voluntary agent. Those who think to make it plain, how a free sinner can become a saint, and yet God be sovereign in the operation, may also undertake to inform us, how Adam could have fallen, or those angels, who fell before him.

The fact is, we cannot explain it: the scriptures merely tell us that man was free—that he was tempted, yielded and fell. We must rest with the facts : there is nothing absurd in them ; but, like a thousand other truths in divine things, they are beyond our comprehension.

It is objected, however, that this was too trifling an act to involve such serious consequences ; and by those who are not willing to take the ground of the infidel, and sneer at it altogether, another view has been adopted, and the whole history been considered an allegory.

Perhaps we have met with those, who considered this whole history of the apple, the woman, and the serpent, as only a figurative representation of some great transgression by which man fell under the displeasure of his Maker. We cannot admit

this, however. Moses, in this early history, does not appear to be speaking in parables, as our Saviour sometimes did. All the rest is a plain prose narrative ; and it would be very extraordinary if, in such a connexion, and on one of the most serious of subjects, he should introduce a highly mystical allegory, without giving the least intimation of it. Besides, we think it an unsafe practice to be interpreting plain scriptures mystically. Whenever the Saviour spoke in parables, he gave a fair intimation of it. If we venture to understand other scriptures in this way, where there is no such intimation, there is no knowing where it will lead us. We believe, then, that we are to understand this history of man's fall as it reads : a very brief sketch, indeed, as all those early narratives are ; but, as far as it goes, true and literal.

And now for the objection that this was a trifling act, we think the objector has not properly considered the subject. It was a trifling act in itself, and so are many others of most eventful consequence ; but what were its *relations ?* Why, it was a test selected by the Almighty himself, for the trial of obedience ; and therefore, the more simple the greater the guilt of transgression : it was

openly and solemnly announced as being that test, and Adam could not and did not misunderstand at all, that on his eating or forbearing to eat of that tree, was suspended all the conditions of the covenant. This keeping of the covenant was encouraged, moreover, by the promise of eternal life. as was also its violation. guarded by the awful threatening of death. We believe too, that Adam knew his standing in this trial to be, not only for himself, but for his posterity. We know, finally, that he was possessed of the most pure and exalted powers for withstanding evil; and if, in these circumstances, pressed with all these powerful considerations, he ate and fell, we cannot consider it a trifling transaction. At all events, the scriptures assure us that this *was* the manner of man's fall; and they attach sufficient importance to the act in the consequences which they ascribe to it. These, however, will be more properly considered in the next division of our subject.

III. The present state of man, morally and naturally considered.

Preliminary to this. it will be necessary to shew that the state of the unconverted world is precisely the same now. with one exception, as was that of Adam, in consequence of

the fall. This exception is, that a Saviour has been provided, and that the very provision has suspended the curse from execution for a season. But, as it respects sinners, this provision does not otherwise benefit them, until it is received by faith in repentance, so that it is proper, with this exception, to consider fallen Adam and his fallen children together.

This is further evident, if you consider our first parents in this trial, as standing for the representative head of their race. But the language and representations of scripture do not permit any doubt that they did stand a representative head to their race. "By the offence of one," says Paul, "judgment came upon all men to condemnation." (Rom. v. 18.) And he further represents, and at large, that the offence of Adam was reckoned to his posterity *in the same way* as the *righteousness of Christ is reckoned to his spiritual family.*

From this and other representations, I understand, then, that Adam stood in this trial as a federal head for others. If he stood, they all stood; if he fell, they all were to be considered as fallen, and of course, that the state of all the unconverted world is the same now, with the above exception, as Adam's was, immediately after the fall.

We wish to convince you, however, of another preliminary truth, and that is, that such a state of fallen men—this reckoning to them of their first father's sin—is perfectly consistent with their own guilt and inexcusableness.

It may be said with truth, that the consequences of Adam's sin rest on an infant, before he is capable of moral action, so that he suffers and dies in consequence, and needs regeneration as well as others, in order to fit him for heaven. This is consistent too with God's justice, else it would not happen; but that is not the present subject of inquiry. We are enquiring after guilt in the common acceptation of the term; of course we must go to the adult person, or the actual sinner. And now we insist, that he is no less guilty, or more excusable, on account of the imputation of original sin to him; for he daily delights in the same things as the first sinner did, and refuses to let them go. What is it to him, how he came by his disposition to sin? he *has* it now, and he indulges in it. What is it to him, whether his sins came in consequence of this imputation, and as a punishment of it, or whether his actual sins had preceded? What difference can it make in his guilt, whether he sins with every other

sinner that has gone before him, or whether he should have stood alone and for himself? One thing is certain; he is now a sinner, a voluntary one, and his whole disposition and conduct shew that, had he stood thus alone, he would have fallen as Adam did. No, he is not less guilty; he is not the more excusable: he must not call it a mere misfortune of his that Adam stood for his posterity.

If it is now established that the fallen world of sinners are in the same state, with one exception, that fallen Adam was, and that sinners are nevertheless guilty, in that state, we are prepared, therefore, to look at this subject more directly.

There is involved in this fallen state of man, then, *a loss of the image of God.* This seems to have been one of the first effects apparent in Adam—his whole moral nature became dissimilar to God. That lovely Being, in whose presence he before took delight, and with whom, in virtue of this moral likeness, he was permitted to commune, now became an object of distaste and fear, and he fled from his presence—just as the unhappy sinner now disrelishes God's holiness—lives all his days without one sweet thought of him; and sedulously avoids his presence and every company that savours of his charac-

ter: thus incontrovertibly proving that he is fallen precisely where Adam was after his apostacy: that, according to another scripture, *God is not in all his thoughts!* that he is entirely depraved.

But, it is asked, if we do not read that men are made even now *in the image of God?* No; it is not said that men are *now* so made. James does indeed say of the tongue, that "therewith bless we God, and curse men, *who are made after the similitude of God!*" But he is evidently speaking of man in respect to the order of his existence among God's works; and he agrees that he should not be cursed, because he holds so exalted a rank in these works. This, then, refers us to what man was, when his place in creation was first assigned him; and the passage is the same as if he had said, therewith curse we man, that exalted order of being, which *was* made in the image of God!

The other proofs, that man, in consequence of the fall, is entirely destitute of holiness, are too obvious and too painful to require enlargement. Alas! that we should know so much of them! What says this universal tendency to sin and debasement in human nature? What says this astonishing blindness of mind and stubbornness of the

will in sinners? Whence this presumptuous forgetfulness and abuse of God by dependent creatures? Why all these groans and strugglings for the dominion of every thing that is hateful even in christians, if it be not that man has entirely alienated himself from his original resemblance to God?

Another part of fallen man's misery is, *that he lies under a sentence of condemnation.* The penalty of the covenant was just and good, and this was, that in the day of transgression man should die. Having incurred this penalty, therefore, the sentence justly fell upon him. Man *died in law and justice.* We have proved that the sentence is the same to us as it was to Adam. *We* then lie under this curse. Instantly, as soon as we begin to live, we come under it. It seizes upon every infant as soon as he breathes; for "*that which is born of the flesh, is flesh,*" and must be born again in order to escape condemnation. It cleaves to every stage of youth; it grows with our years, and increases with all our sins. It hangs over the head of every presumptuous legalist: it pursues the careless neglector of vital godliness down to his grey hairs, and his last evasion. It stands by his death bed: it presents its thundering claim to every false plea of indulgence from the general

mercy of God; and when the soul departs, if it still depart without a better hope, seizes that trembling soul, and binds and devours it as all its own. So rigid—so immoveably just is that condemning curse which hangs over us all, until effectually taken away by the atonement of the Great Redeemer.

Finally, we are to take into this account of man's present misery, *all those natural evils with which he is surrounded.* But how great, how extensive a part of our experience, do these natural evils comprise! From infancy to age, we groan under them. They meet us wherever we turn our eye, or direct our contemplation.

Of what diabolical cruelties is man guilty to his fellow man! What oceans of human blood have soaked the earth to make way for the thrones of ambition! What want and plagues have bloated the grave with dead! What pains and accidents torture and deform our bodies! What tears and crosses, and bereavements, and mental infirmities, disturb and destroy our peace! What dangers do we encounter from air, earth, sea, sun, moon and stars! What poisonous qualities mingle in almost every substance! What disorders do we sometimes see in the heavens! what convulsions in the

earth! what distressful revolutions! what crumbling of thrones! what instability of empires! What distresses do we suffer from slander, from violence, from our own imprudence, and not the least of all, from the pangs of remorse, and the anticipations of that worm that shall never cease its gnawings! All these, and a thousand more, may be thrown together in the class of natural evils. They go to make up, not only the proof, but the inheritance of our fallen state. A righteous, but a sad inheritance it is! Such is the sum of our view of our original state, the cause of change, and of our present condition. No part of the representation, I hope, will be considered as exaggerated. It cannot be, for the truth is matter of general and daily experience.

There are two reflections to which I wish to turn your attention, as growing out of this subject, and then I have done. *The first is, that we should always, in speaking of evil, connect it with its cause.* We have seen it to be the constitution of God's government, that guilt should always precede suffering. The world did not experience its change to evil until Adam had sinned: even our infant sufferings do not commence until that guilt is reckoned to us: our actual sins have a still

more direct connection with misery. Whenever we see misery therefore, and deplore it, it should always be considered as connected with our guilt. Instead of idly lamenting evil, and speaking of it as a mere misfortune, it would be more correct to say, *I* have procured that evil, or *I* have aggravated it, and to mourn over ourselves accordingly.

But, secondly, *what a dreadful evil*, in view of this subject, *is sin!* If we cannot so sensibly enter into its deformity, as committed against a holy God; if we are not touched by seeing its presumption, pride, unbelief and dishonour, in breaking Adam's covenant and depriving him of all his hope and happiness; if these views of sin do not affect you, I would invite you to look at some of its natural consequences. Let us select a single instance:

The city of *Barcelona*, in Spain, is, at this moment, (1822) suffering the visitation of a terrible plague. One thousand inhabitants are said to die daily. The dead cannot be all buried; but lie in heaps upon the pavements, or putrify in horrid masses in the midst of their houses. Ten thousand dead are represented as thus lying unburied at once, and twenty carts, filled with their bodies, cannot remove them as fast as they accumulate. In

the town of *Barcelonett*, in that vicinity, the last person has perished; and the frightful description of a writer on the spot is, that "all the world is dead!" Glance your thought at this picture; consider it as connected with all the usual attendants of distress—of terror—of mental horror, and of agonized affections. Now consider death as personified in this instance, as standing over this devoted city, with a giant form as tall as the heavens, and with a countenance dark and unrelenting, dealing these nameless miseries in one unremitted and horrible ministration; and when this one city is desolated, conceive of him as departing, with unsatiated cruelty, to send the same plagues into another; and then another and another, till the last living existence of the world has yielded to his sway: until our whole wide earth and sea exhibit but one waste of mouldering, dreary, moveless carcases—a void and horrible silence reigns over all. Conceive of this, and you may have some idea of the natural evils of sin. Amen.

LECTURE VIII.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

JOB xxxiii. 23, 24.

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: then He is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.

On no subject of scripture, perhaps, does the strong and lively language of metaphor so often obtain, as when speaking of the deliverance of the soul from death by the interposition of a Redeemer. This Redeemer is sometimes called *a strong hold*, and then sinners are urged to flee into it: sometimes an *ark*, a *tower*, a *city of refuge*—in all which representations, danger, on the part o men, is implied, and on the part of God, a provision for deliverance.

This state of danger and misery is further represented under the terms, *bondage*, *death*, the *grave*, a *land of famine*, and *a horrible pit*.

With all these, however, some representation of relief is usually connected, and this is presented in the like figurative form: as of a *victor*, overcoming the enemy—a *father*, forgiving a penitent child—a *provident Prince*, relieving the miseries of famine—a *compassionate benefactor*, conferring favour on the distressed—or a *meritorious ransom*, procuring deliverance for the imprisoned.

But the illustration of young Elihu, in our text, is more striking than any yet adduced. Literally taken, it is the description of a case of severe sickness in an individual, and a restoration to health, which God, in his providence, graciously grants upon repentance and the application of proper remedies. We cannot think, however, that it is to be limited by this construction. There are expressions and personages, as well as facts, introduced into this description, which seem to make it consistent, only on the supposition of being intended, in its highest sense, *of the deliverance of a fallen world from death, upon the intervention of a Redeemer.*

In this sense, therefore, we shall now use it. Our last lecture left man under all the miseries resulting from a violated *covenant of works*: let us now look at his provisional deliverance, *by the covenant of grace.*

I. And first, of the PARTIES in this covenant. Our text presents us with two, who may properly be considered parties in the covenant, and then with a third, who is the subject of it. It is God *the Father*, who *finds* a ransom, and proclaims an act of deliverance upon it: it is God *the Son*, evidently, who is here represented as the procuring *cause* of the deliverance; and he is called, also, as he is in many other scriptures, a *messenger*, an *angel*, an *interpreter*, or prophet, '*one of a thousand*,' on this account, and the very *ransom*, or Hebrew *ceper*, so often presented as the meritorious price of our deliverance. These are properly the parties, since, after the fall, to which this transaction looks, only Divine Beings could enter into the covenant; but there is another party presented as the *subject* of this transaction, and that is *man*, or the poor, sick and despairing invalid of our text, 'whose soul draweth near to death and his life to the destroyers.'—What more striking representation can we have of our fallen state, as lying in the midst of all those miseries, which we so lately contemplated?

II. But let us now, in the second place, LOOK AT THE TRANSACTION ITSELF. Man is represented as lying in his guilt and help-

lessness, under the miseries of the great condemnation. In this state, we believe God looked at him from eternity ; and now, whether we take our text as alluding to that eternal arrangement of mercy, which was made between the persons of the God-head, or only a particular dispensation of that plan, in the interposition made by the Son, at the time of the fall, in either way we have the same essential features of a covenant.

The fallen world is sinking under the weight of the curse in progressive and certain destruction, like the poor diseased patient of our text—no remedy has reached his case—no cheering symptoms of natural abatement appear : the wasting effects of disease are every moment more visible, and the despairing decision has already been announced, that *he must die !* Essential Deity is represented as presiding over the scene. Not with vindictive and unsatiated anger, does God look down upon the fallen world ; but he inspects it, and presides over its destinies, as a righteous Judge. He seems to say, ' the sick man is dying—he dies justly—necessarily : it is in consequence of his own sin, and I shall not arrest his progress.' All the Divine attributes, if we might personify

them, are seen joining in the righteous decision. *Equity* represents the perfect consistency of suffering man to die, in the natural consequences of voluntary sin: *holiness* suggests the impossibility of permitting pollution to enter God's presence: justice pleads the danger of suffering a broken law to remain unvindicated; and love, and pity, and benevolence, prevented by the awful difficulties of deliverance, open no plea in its favour.

If, however, a plan could be devised, for consistent deliverance—if a person could be found competent to carry it into effect, man might yet be saved. All these holy attributes would heartily rejoice in such a plan, and the Deity be glorified by its development.

This part of the glorious transaction was reserved for the Son. He was *competent* to it; for he possessed the characteristics of both the parties, and could therefore be an interpreter and *one of a thousand* between them. He had a *right* to dispose of his services, being under no law, as a creature. He was *willing* as he was able to save; and he cried, "*Lo I come.* In the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God."

As this is supposed, at present, to relate rather to the interposition of a mediator, at the fall, than to the covenant of eternity, the speech of the Son may be thus paraphrazed: "Behold me, Father; here I stand, the advocate of that fallen world: Is it not remembered, that in the visions of eternity, when we looked down on man, as lying in this condition, I undertook to be his surety? Is it not written in the volume of the heavenly records, that I *should* appear to do this service? Gladly I now obey the decree! I stand for yonder wretched world: I bear their load: I engage for their duty: I will satisfy for their guilt: they are mine, and shall be, by every sacrifice it may cost me! I am ready, even now, if need be, to assume their nature. I will begin their deliverance: I will enlighten them, govern them, die for them, and sanctify them, that all thy attributes may be sacred, and heaven not polluted by their admission. Remember the covenant, gracious Father; this fallen world is mine, and *must* be spared for mercy.—And now, that it is consistent to do so, behold their wretchedness, Father, and let it move thee to pity. Look at this poor diseased sinner: "his flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; his bones stick out, yea, his soul draw-

eth near to death, and his life to the destroyers:" lover and friend he has none; his companions are helpless as himself, and none from above is permitted to pity him. Is there then no balm in Gilead? is there no physician? Father, shall not *I* undertake this kindly office? shall I not bind up man's wounds, and rebuke his sore diseases? Friend of the friendless—helper of the helpless and despairing—where shall man go for mercy, but to Thee? Wilt thou not pity the creature whom thou hast made? wilt thou not, for *my sake*, permit his release from death?"

The Father can resist it no longer: he has presided as Judge and Governor in this scene, until the means of deliverance have been made manifest, and his part of *declaring the decision* is fully prepared; and he now cries, with all the mercies of the melting father beaming in his countenance, *Yes:* I will spare them—I can, I do—I delight to spare them: "Deliver them from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." Be it proclaimed in the high armies of heaven, that this is in virtue of an eternal contract with my Son. Be it remembered, that I here take him "for a covenant to the people," in all things necessary for their redemption—"he shall magnify the law and make it hon-

durable :" "he shall pour out his soul an offering for sin :" " he shall see his seed :" " they shall be willing in the day of his power"— " in the beauty of holiness," and as numerous as the dew from the womb of the morning. This day, therefore, I proclaim him my beloved Son, and set him upon my holy hill of Zion. " And he shall reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet :" " He shall judge the world :" " he shall gather his elect from the four corners of heaven, with a great sound of a trumpet :" He shall confirm them in glory, " an innumerable multitude, which no man can number ;" and " then cometh the end ;" " the Son himself shall deliver up *this* kingdom, and God be all in all."

We have thus alluded to the parties in this covenant, and, in conformity with the allegorical description of our text, to the transaction itself, so far as relates to the first visible dispensation of it in the rescue of fallen man. We may soberly assure ourselves, moreover, that there is reality in all this representation. There *was* an interposition for fallen man very near the time of his rebellion. In allusion to this, the interposing person is called a *mediator*, *a day's man*, and an *advocate* with the Father ; and in virtue of

this, the first evangelical promise was given, and sacrifices instituted for a still more instructive *memento*. The declarative part of this covenant, in the latter clause of our text, we have contemplated.

III. Let us now look AT SOME OF ITS CONSEQUENCES.

And we have, *first*, this benefit, that the curse which had been pronounced upon fallen man, was, in consequence of this interposition, *suspended from execution*.

If we have any due conception of the offensive nature of sin; if we consider, for a moment, how it must have appeared to God in this beginning of its dreadful career—or if we look only at the solemn pledge which had been given, that in the day of his rebellion, man *should surely die*, we shall be convinced that the world could have been spared, after the fall, only in virtue of some meritorious interposition. It lay at that dreadful moment fully obnoxious to the curse, and nothing else could have saved it. Every token of favour and indulgence must have been instantly withdrawn, and all vestiges of former goodliness in the works of God's hands must have vanished. The world is then left an unmitigated scene of all that is vile, and hateful, and wretched, and man instantly begins his ever-

lasting burning in a hell which his own hands have made. From this dreadful consequence of the fall, the interposition of Christ has saved us. It does not, of itself, bring us back to holiness; but it saves us from an immediate hell, and retains us in a state where a change of character is possible. It presents that extent of misery, also, in a fallen world, which otherwise would have proved too severe for the continuance of our race: it retains many inviting tokens of God's mercy in the works of his hands: it provides a broader and a smoother path for those, who shall be wise enough to travel the backward road from banishment: it even permits others, for the sake of the saints' connexion with them, to experience deliverance from many evils, and to enjoy many providential mercies, which had never been possible, but for this interposition.

Behold this fallen world, then, and especially man, in this fallen world, as reprieved and spared for a season by this mediation of the Redeemer. The cloud which hangs over him is indeed dark: it is a cloud of wrath still, and full of dreadful lightnings; but it does not yet pour out itself; and while it is suspended, it is that an offer of mercy may be made in the solemn pause.

2. The *second* great benefit procured by

the interposition of Christ, is that *the offer of mercy was, in consequence, made us.* God could now consistently make this offer. A pledge of obedience had been given, for the honour of his law, by one who never lied: a covenant had been made, which secured the obedience of the creature also: Holiness, as well as justification, would follow, if fallen man should embrace the covenant. There was no danger that heaven would be polluted by the entrance of a sinner saved "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:" there was no fear of a jar in the harmony of God's attributes, "when mercy and truth should meet together:" no apprehension of a diminished revenue to God's glory, in a transaction which should forever redound to "the exceeding riches of his grace."

Every thing was safe in the plan devised: God could now consistently make an offer of mercy to his fallen creatures; and he delighted to make it. "*Deliver him*, said he, *from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.*" Let my fallen creatures have the offer of salvation. Let pardon, and justification, and holiness, and heaven regained be his, on the condition of his accepting the surety. *I offer it*, said Jehovah—and mercy, and truth, and

spotless holiness, and even rigid justice, rejoiced in the proposal.

This, dear hearers, is the same offer which God's ministers are now commissioned to make to you. It began to be proclaimed by the Saviour, on that very spot where Adam fell, and which might, without it, have been warmed with his blood. It was then delivered to others, and handed down to Enoch and Noah, and Melchizedeck, and Moses, and a succession of preachers of righteousness, through all the dark and criminal ages of Israel's history, to the coming of the Messiah. Then there arose a John, preaching repentance and remission of sins, through faith in the coming Messiah. Then came the Messiah himself, and sent out his seventy with the same commission: and when he was about to ascend on high—having finished the engagements of this high covenant, he embodied in one form the great warrant and command, under which all his ministers should go forth, and under which they have ever since been going forth, preaching peace and repentance through Jesus Christ, for he is Lord of all. Oh, how they feel themselves honoured by this high association! how grand the thought! how imposing the message they bear! These ministers are

now proclaiming the same offer of mercy to fallen man, which at first began to be proclaimed by God himself, and which patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, have been in every age proclaiming: "*Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.*"

Finally, we have spiritual life and an actual restoration of happiness through this covenant. The interposition of Christ did not, as we have observed, confer holiness of itself; still there was no uncertainty about it. Christ gave himself in the covenant, with a specific object. The condition of the Father to him was, that "*a seed should serve him:*" that "*he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.*" This seed, thus given to him, were made so soon as to be called *his people—his sheep—his chosen ones*, long before they came into existence; and it was promised that all, who were thus "*given to him, should come unto him;*" and "*they that came unto him, should in no wise be cast out.*" To secure the fulfilment of this, the Holy Spirit was promised, and it was said, "*thy people shall be willing, or converted, in the day of thy power.*" The conversion of Christ's seed, though not effected by the mere interposition of Christ, is therefore not

uncertain. It is secured by the covenant and the means provided for its fulfilment.

Let us now suppose all this to have been fulfilled in the sinner, and see what a glorious result it presents. His lost happiness is restored. To use the similitude of our text again, his dreadful *disease* is rebuked: "his flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth; he shall pray to God, and he will be favourable to him; he shall see his face with joy, for he will render unto man his righteousness."

Do you not see in all this, my brethren, a beautiful and striking similitude for describing spiritual restoration? Rather let me ask, do you not discover in it an exhibition of those happy frames which yourselves have sometimes experienced, and especially, when bursting your way into the discovery of pardon and favour, after the dark day of your spiritual conflict? There you had long lain, like the sinking victim of sickness, wasting away and despairing under the visible progress of your disease; "*the sorrows of death compassed you about, and the pains of hell gat hold of you;*" but this disease was suddenly and unexpectedly removed: you heard your heavenly physician rebuke it: you felt the life-giving impulse instantly enter your

bones; the returning fulness of spiritual health began to be manifest; your tongue broke forth in praises to God, and the conviction that he heard you renewed your thanksgivings. Seven times a day you went before him, and seven times his countenance broke forth with brighter and lovelier radiance upon you. You called him your Father and your God, with an unvarying tongue: you saw, with renewed wonder and admiration, that it was *his own method of righteousnees* by which you was delivered; and you desired all, who feared the Lord, to come unto you, that you "*might tell them what he had done for your soul.*"

Is it wonderful then, (permit me to ask in review of our subject,) *is it wonderful that the new born sinner should rejoice in the goodness of God?* Let it be supposed that he has no very systematic acquaintance with those glorious truths now disclosed in the *covenant of grace:* he has only the sensations of the moral sickness it discloses, and he has seen and felt enough to perceive his deliverance: *Is it wonderful that he is joyful?*

The sensation of returning health, after sickness, is, I think, one of the highest and most thrilling enjoyments of life. Who that has felt it, will not agree with me that it

is indescribable? When creeping back from the grave's mouth, and beginning to regain a little strength, you are first permitted to ride abroad; to breathe the invigorating air; to feel yourself at large; to stretch the expatiating eye once more over green fields and a blue heaven, through which you feel as if your swelling soul would leap in praise of your great Deliverer. These are the felt, but unutterable similitudes by which the deliverance of a soul from death is illustrated; and who now, that considers the greater magnitude, the higher zest, and the more lasting duration of this last deliverance, will tell me that it calls for no warmth of praises!

Be it so, to those, who can satisfy themselves with indifference—Be it so! Let them enjoy all the comfort, and all the imagined consistency of heartless acknowledgments and formal concessions; of obligations unfelt, and scarcely expressed, through fear of being enthusiastic. Let a man talk of his new creation, with a cold hope that it is so; let him assent to the fact, that if so, he is saved from hell and made an heir of heaven, with an hesitating *yes*, which almost amounts to a negative: let those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ from the sickness which was unto the second

death, and sent abroad with new born flesh and soul, to drink in the boundless heaven of God's free smiles; let them talk of the change with cold indifference, if they can, and shun the dreadful sin of enthusiasm, as they would a blasphemy—they are welcome. If grateful praise for such a deliverance be this sin, I mourn for my own part, that I have not more of it: and though I would probably as much discountenance disorderly worship as any one, I should not wonder if redeemed sinners felt warmer hearts and uttered louder praises than they do. Why do not they outnoise the tempests of this busy world with such a theme? Why do we not feel all the musical combinations, of which animated nature is capable, put in requisition for one grand concert to this immortal chorus? Why do we not sometimes hear the praises of this upper world, bursting the intervening expanse, and moving upon the atmosphere of our dull world, like the angels' anthem on the plains of Bethlehem?

> "When Jordan hush'd his wave, and midnight still
> "Slept on the holy towers of Zion's hill."

The theme is worthy, and the words will be the same, though the musick will be changed, when sung to the harps of heaven—

" Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to man"—" Deliver him from going down to the pit : I have found a ransom."

So much for this high subject, to those who can enter into some of its feelings from experience. And what if there be those, who cannot thus enter into it from experience ? What if there be those, who have never felt an exulting heart for the provisions of redemption ? who could take no note in this high song ? who would have heard, unmoved, the message of angels at Bethlehem ?— There may be such, but what then ? shall we therefore forbear to repeat the heavenly message to them ? No : this will not do ; we have a dispensation committed unto us, and discharge it we must, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. It is a high and an honoured dispensation, sinner : We proclaim to you to-day, no novel or unsanctioned message. It is the same which has been preached by martyrs, and apostles, and prophets, in a thousand tongues : it is the message of paradise, and fell from the compassionate bosom of God himself, upon the interposition of a Saviour. " Save him." &c.

We say to all such hearers to-day, then, that you are lying upon a bed of sore and doleful sickness: the anger of an offended God has kindled a burning fever in your bones: you are "chastened with strong pains upon your bed:" "Your "flesh is consuming away," and there is no human medicine which can reach your case and bring you deliverance. You are under a fatal moral disease, sinner, and die you certainly must: downward you hasten to the pit, which is already open—you are even now dying, and the next moment you will be gone!

Now, I ask, is this a moment to trifle? will a dying man indulge in gaiety and mirth? will he laugh or talk of worldly business, when his friends tell him, 'you are even now growing cold?'

This is really your condition, sinner: God says you are drawing near to the pit. Do not trifle about it; 'tis a serious thing to die; 'tis a dreadful thing to drop right down from a death bed into hell!

Oh! this is the condition, probably, of a large part of my congregation: They are dying; they are going to the pit! But hark! a voice of strange and delightful import is heard! Look upward, dying sinner: see that mighty God-man, standing between heaven

and earth, and filling all the intervening space! Observe how his bleeding hands are raised in supplication for you! and now, he bends a look of infinite tenderness over your bed of woe; and now the voice from the eternal presence is heard, "*Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.*" Amen.

LECTURE IX.

REGENERATION.

JOHN i. 13.

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

It is hardly necessary to say that the term *regenerated*, and others equivalent to it, are often applied to christians in scripture. It is believed that these are designations of christian character, more frequently used in the New Testament than any other: so that, on this consideration, as well as many others, it becomes a matter of the first importance to attach correct ideas to the term.

I am not, however, about to attempt a deep investigation of this subject. There are many excellent works on regeneration, to which my young friends have access; and my object at present, is *simply to furnish those scriptures, which speak of regeneration, and then,*

from a careful view of the whole, to infer what we are to understand of the doctrine.

And here it may be necessary to premise, that this term has several variations in scripture, without altering its essential meaning. These variations have sometimes been produced by a different translation of the same original word; as what in one place is called *being born again*, is expressed in another by *regeneration*—the words in the Greek being the same. Sometimes this idea of a new birth is expressed by giving us *its origin*, in contrast with the origin of another birth—as in that passage of John—"that which is born *of the flesh* is flesh, and that which is born *of the Spirit* is spirit:" and sometimes by simply styling it *a new work*, in opposition to an older one; "if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a *new creature;* old *things* are passed away."

There are several other variations; but these are sufficient to show that the same thing is meant in different modes of expression. Where we quote passages, therefore, which speak of *regeneration*—being *born again*—*born of God* and the Spirit—*begotten of God, and begotten again*—*a new creature, and created anew in Christ Jesus*—we wish you to con-

sider them all as relating to the same subject.

We shall now attend to the passages, and let them speak for themselves. And we begin with John iii. 3—6, 7. "Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." (1 Peter i. 23.) "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." "Wherefore, (ii. ch. 2d verse) As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 John v. 1.) "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God"—and ii. 29, "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."

(Titus iii. 5.) "Saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," which I understand of the distinction between the new birth and sanctification; and again, (Matthew xix. 28.) "Ye, (says the Saviour,) which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit up-

on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here regeneration is probably used in a general sense, as referring to that renovation of all things, which is expected at the end of the world; and in that event, the Saviour tells his disciples they shall sit with him in judgment; but even on this construction, the passage is to our purpose, since this illustration is evidently taken from a case of individual regeneration.

Let us proceed with our quotations. (1 Pet. i. 3.) "Who hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 James i. 18.) "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." And again, in 1 John v. 1, "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him."

In Ephesians ii. 10, we are said to be "his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works." Again, 2 Cor. v. 17, "If any man be in Christ, *he is a new* creature," or, there is a new creation; and finally, in our text, those who had just been called *the sons of God—those who have received him and believed on his name*, are said to *be born*, but "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God."

Recurring now to the truth above stated, that all these representations refer to the same thing, let us carefully inquire what it is. What is the meaning of that regeneration so often spoken of in scripture? We answer,

1. That it cannot be intended *of the privileges of belonging to the Jewish church.* The Jews were indeed a peculiar people, and it was a privilege to belong to their community by lineal descent; but this lineal descent cannot be intended here; for, says our text, "they were born *not of blood;*" and it was told Nicodemus, who was a Jew, that except he *were* born again he could not enter the kingdom of heaven.

2. Nor can regeneration be meant by a *visible membership* in *any* church; for it is represented as something effected *by the Spirit of God*, whereas a visible membership with God's people may be formed without such assistance.

3. *Water baptism* cannot be intended by regeneration. Among many considerations to shew this, I shall adduce one, which has ever appeared to me conclusive. Saith John, "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, *is born of God:*" but multitudes have believed this *before* they were baptized; nay, in all cases of adult baptism, this belief is re-

quired as a *pre-requisite*, as is evident from the words of Philip to the Eunuch. Many, on the other hand, have been baptized, who never did believe in this sense: but those who believe, and those who are born of God, are represented as the same persons. Baptism, therefore, cannot be the same as regeneration.

4. Again; this regeneration is *not the same as sanctification.* I apprehend it is sometimes imagined to be so. Many will talk freely of the necessity of sanctification, i. e. of a gradual turning from sin unto holiness—who seem afraid to speak of regeneration as a radical and immediate change; and I conclude their view must be, that regeneration in scripture means the same thing as progressive holiness or sanctification. That they are not the same, however, and ought not to be thus confounded, is evident from two considerations. The *first* is, that some texts distinguish between these graces. "Saved, (says Paul to Titus) by the washing of regeneration *and* the renewing of the Holy Ghost." *Secondly*, sanctification is represented as necessary *after* regeneration:—"created in Christ Jesus *unto good works, that we should walk in them;*" but regeneration is never represented as necessary after sanctification

There are other important distinctions, but this is sufficient to shew, that regeneration is not the same as a progressive turning to God.

5. In guarding further this negative part of our subject, let us offer several views to prove that regeneration is *not the same as natural morality:* and that natural morality cannot in any instance, *be a substitute for it.* Neither of these can be true, for

First: The supposition *destroys the general necessity of regeneration.* Our Saviour certainly does teach, that "except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." But if mere natural morality were sufficient, or the same as regeneration, then multitudes, all infants certainly, who not having contracted the guilt of actual sin, might enter heaven without it.

Secondly. It contradicts entirely the doctrine of total depravity. If man by nature, be unholy, what shall be produced by cultivation but more unholiness? or, in the language of scripture, "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." (Job. xiv. 4.)

Thirdly. The scriptures speak of this change as *succeeding* to, and in *opposition to our first birth.* It is called a *new* birth, and being born *again.* Can it then be the same as the *first* birth?

Fourthly. It is represented as being different *in its nature*, from the first birth. "That which is born of the flesh, *is flesh;* but that which is born of the Spirit, *is spirit.*"

Fifthly. It is ascribed to a different agency. The first birth is by natural generation; the second is called being born *of God.*

Sixthly. If mere natural morality were regeneration, then the saying of our text *would not be true*, that it is "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh." On that supposition, it *is* of blood and of the will of the flesh. Nor,

Finally, would it be true that it was "not of the will of man:" Our text asserts, however, that this change "is *not* of the will of man."

Consider moreover, (for I confess myself zealous on this part of our subject) that if the ground of mere natural morality be taken, the following difficulties are to be surmounted. *What necessity could there be*, on such a supposition, *for the gift of a Saviour?* Would he have made the sacrifices he did, if mere morality could have saved the sinner?

But admitting, what we do not believe, that his coming has, in some way, changed the nature of God's requirements—we have again to ask, if you do not, by the stand now taken, *put yourself aside from that supposeable*

benefit? Christ is to be received *by faith*, and the scriptures represent those who *believe* in him as being the same with those who are *born of God;* of course, *not to be born of God*, is the same as to be *without faith*, and then you are to be excluded from the benefits of Christ's death.

And have we ever known such a scheme to bear the test of a fair experiment? We have never, I think, seen the individual, who trusted in such a scheme, appearing to feel the love of Christ in life or death; but we have, on the other hand, seen the scheme abandoned by many, who subsequently lived and died like the children of God: and we have seen even this boasted morality to fail and be practiced no longer, where the local circumstances and motives upon which it was bottomed, had, in the allotments of Providence, been different.

From so many proofs and considerations, we are irresitibly led to the conclusion, that *regeneration is not the same as natural morality;* and *that natural morality cannot, in any instance, be a substitute for it.*

II. *What then is regeneration?* If it be neither lineal descent; nor visible churchmembership; nor water baptism; nor progressive holiness; nor yet mere natural morality;

what is it? Our text and the other scriptures which have been quoted afford the following answer: *It is radically a new state of the moral man, wrought by God, by the particular agency of the Holy Spirit; instantaneously produced, as to the principle of it; and going forth in exercises of faith, repentance and new obedience.*

It is a *new* state of the moral man, because it succeeds to and is in opposition to his first state: it is *radical*, as being the beginning of a new principle, not the improvement of an old one: it is *instantaneous*, since there must be a beginning to every new thing, which did not before exist: it is assigned to the *agency of God the Spirit*, as being a part of his office-work: and it is said, in other scriptures, to be *by the word of God*, implying the instrumentality of a preached and read word: and *a creation in Christ Jesus*, to represent both the magnitude of the work and its meritorious cause.

Regeneration, moreover, stands in opposition to conversion; as conversion, or turning to God, is an active work on the part of its subject, and regeneration is a passive one: it precedes sanctification; being the commencement of that principle of holiness in the soul, which it is the work of sanctification to improve during life; and it is a work

wrought, as to the agency and mode of it—"not by will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Some difficulties, we know, might be stated on this part of our subject, and the question will be asked, perhaps, how the heart of a free moral being can be changed by a foreign agency? We choose to leave the decision just in the words of our text, however; and if any doubt the *fact* of God's sovereign operation in this matter, we will ask them to look at it again, and see if a different construction is possible: "who are born, *not* of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

There is another passage, which appears to me to hold the same language on this subject. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;" (Psalm cx. 3;) and still another in the words of our Saviour himself—"No man can come to me, (said he) except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John. vi. 44.)

I do not know that I understand the meaning of these passages at all; but if I do understand them, they teach the *fact*, unquestionably, of God's efficient and sovereign operation in the change of the human heart.

With a few REFLECTIONS, growing out of this subject, we shall now close. And

First. What a great change must that be, of which we have been speaking! It is called, you observe, a *new birth*—a *new creation*—*being begotten of God and of the Holy Spirit.* Mankind are represented as naturally without this requisite of moral character, and unable to produce it of themselves. When it is begun, it is the beginning of another nature: and this nature, when it is in any good degree matured, exhibits new principles, new feelings—an entirely new moral existence. Certainly this must be a great work. Those who have considered it, as only an incidental state of things in the christian course, have mistaken its character. It is a great change, whether existing under the concealed exercises of an infant christian, or matured into the ripe sanctification which sometimes just precedes death—it is a great thing to possess a new heart. If we have been regenerated, we ought to be greatly thankful for it, and gaze upon the change with as much of admiration, as that with which the angels gazed upon the world, rising out of nothing!

2. *What importance is thus attached to the work of self-examination!* A leading object

of religious examination is to determine this great question, if possible, whether we have experience of regeneration. But what a question is this! It not only relates to a great subject, but it has the most stupendous consequences attached to it; for, says the word of God, except a man *do* possess this change, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. With what avidity, my hearers, should we examine a sealed sentence, sent us by a court of justice, which had tried us for a capital crime, when we knew, that in what we read would be the issues of life or death to us! But if this whole world were at stake—if the examination we were about to make should determine whether it was to be burnt up to-morrow, it could not be a question of so much moment as that we attempt to settle when we set down to examine ourselves. How is it then with us, professing brethren? do we find evidence that this great change has passed upon us? or is the evidence against us? It appears to me, we cannot be contented to be even uncertain on such a subject: and it must be either because we are strangely stupid, or hope for better evidence hereafter, that we can be willing to rest in uncertainty with so much indifference. And now,

3. *The subject affords plain and excellent rules for assisting in this work of examination.* It tells us, if we are born again, we have *new feelings* and *new principles :* there is an *opposition* between these and old principles, creating a warfare : we *love the ways of God*, which we before disrelished : we are *growing in the divine life*, as the new born infant grows in the natural life : the *begotten* will always bear a resemblance to him who *begat ;* and we are, in one word, *like God*, in all the moral properties of our nature. If we have these properties and exercises, therefore, it is an evidence that we are regenerated. And

4. Permit me to suggest one reflection, as arising out of this subject, *for the encouragement of weak believers.* True it is, that the work of regeneration is a great work, and a final decision of the question upon it decides our eternal destiny. But why does the question of regeneration decide it ? not because regeneration is the meritorious ground of our salvation, but because this state *is necessary* in order to salvation, and because such a state is an evidence of faith. Thus, in our text and context, faith and regeneration are affirmed of the same persons. The ultimate question, then, is, *have you faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ?* And here it may be you

have, though you have but little comfortable sense of it, and little other evidence of piety: it may be you dare trust your soul to your Saviour without reserve, and feel a strong persuasion towards his mercy, because you know him to be gracious and yourself a miserable sinner, though you have but little evidence as to other christian exercises, and generally fear that you are a stranger to regeneration.

We certainly think, then, you ought to be encouraged; your faith may be real, though very weak: and real faith is certainly connected with regeneration. How is it in the first birth? The infant that only breathes, has, as really, the principles of life as the full grown man; but he needs more nursing, and so it is with the weak believer. How unreasonable then, if you are so weak, to refuse to be strengthened? What a great mistake to lie still and wait for more strength in the neglect of means, when those means are the very food you need to give the strength in question!

Finally: what a solemn and pressing *necessity* urges those who have not been made partakers of regeneration! Suppose it were now announced from heaven, my friends, that not one of you should ever see a mo-

ment's cessation from pain, nor go from this house with life, except you should, within a given time, procure a pass from some authorized individual—suppose this, and yet that many of you should not stir, but calmly suffer the time to pass and remain as you are; what would be the conclusion as to your state of intellect or your feelings! We have reason to think, however, that such is the case of many, in relation to the great concern of regeneration: It has been announced to be indispensably necessary to procure it in life, or to perish forever! Worlds are suspended on this condition, and yet multitudes do not stir, nor seem anxious. What can be the reason? Do you not yet believe it necessary? or is it mere stupidity? Either conclusion is dreadful. That must be a fearful depth of depravity which can induce security under the admission of these truths—and as to calling them in question—oh! friends, it must not be done. We beg you to think again of the proofs; we beg of you to look around and sum up all the observations you have ever made on this subject, and say, if you *can* doubt, that there is a reality in *regeneration* and a *necessity* for it! Has not God said it is necessary? Has not every soul yet

found it so? Is it not then necessary for *you?*

Then why this awful neglect in irreligion? Why this strange indifference in danger? Do not tell us you can do nothing for your new birth, and therefore you are excusable—that even to-day it has been declared, *it must be of God.* If it be so, that does not remove your danger: If it be so, your guilt remains; and equally strange is it still, that you should be unconcerned. But as the present is not the place for entering into this subject, do let us be careful not to loose sight of the main point: you must be born again, sinner, and dreadful is your danger—awful and imminent is your cause of alarm, if you be not!

Look back and reflect! have you not really reason to fear that some, whom you once knew, have gone, or are now rapidly going down to hell, in consequence of neglecting just such truths as these? They heard—they admitted perhaps; but they did not feel, and now they are gone far from righteousness, or already beyond the reach of mercy; and shall it be so with you? Can you bear to look forward a few more fleeting days, and see yourselves in the same condition?—dying without hope, or standing before God's

bar, and not one poor excuse to offer that you did not attain to religion! Oh! my friends, these are awful subjects: and may the Lord enable you to feel them! Amen.

LECTURE X.

FAITH AND REPENTANCE.

ACTS xx. 21.

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

It would be wrong, in a course of Theological Lectures, to pass over the great subjects of faith and repentance. It might be imagined perhaps, that themes on which we so frequently dwell, scarce needed a formal discussion. But you may recollect, my young friends, that John wrote to his disciples, not "because they knew not the truth; but because they knew it." (1 John, ii. 21.) And it will be well to consider too, that the reason why these truths are so often brought before you, is their immeasurable importance in the christian system.

It would be well then, not only to be familiar with the terms faith and repentance, but to understand their import, and to be able to

give suitable proofs and illustrations of these doctrines; and we may be very certain that whatever prominence is given to these subjects in our preaching, we have not yet gone beyond the apostles in this matter, who "testified both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ."

What then is faith; and what is repentance? and how are these graces related to each other in christian experience?

But before directly answering these queries, we have a preliminary remark to make on another example here set us by the apostle. It is, that in discussing this subject, *he mentions faith and repentance together.* It is probable the apostle had never heard the question discussed, whether faith or repentance be first in the order of gracious exercises. He was less in the habit of making nice and unprofitable distinctions than some modern Theologians: He knew moreover, that where one of these christian graces is possessed the other is possessed;—that they do in reality spring up simultaneously in the new born soul, and therefore, here and elsewhere, they are mentioned together. Still we are free to admit, that, *in the order of nature*, there is a precedence between faith and

repentance, and that this precedence belongs to the former; since, strictly speaking, there can be no true repentance but that which springs from a believing view of God's mercy. In this view they are perfectly related to each other; but in the order of time there is no distinction. Let us now proceed with our queries :

I. And first, of FAITH.

And here we answer, that faith, in general, is a *persuasion in favour of truth.* The root of the original word in the New Testament signifies to persuade, and may be applied to a strong persuasion of the mind in favour of any truth, whether divine or human. Of course there are several kinds of faith, taking their meaning from the nature of the subjects to which they relate : such as a *religious faith*, in distinction from *human faith :* an *historical faith,* or the assent of the mind to historical testimony, which does not necessarily affect the heart : a *temporary faith*, which has respect only to the present advantages of an assent to christian doctrine—and a *faith of miracles*, which has not necessarily any reference to the love of God in the heart, but consists in that strong persuasion of power to work miracles by the gift of God, which obtained in a former period of the church.

Evangelical, or saving faith, imports more than any of these; and as it is evident that this is the kind of faith intended in our text, and principally insisted on in scripture, our remaining explanations will be confined to it. It consists principally in two things.

1. *In a full and intelligent assent of the understanding to the truths of God's word.* So far, indeed, this is an exercise common to some other kinds of faith; but it relates more particularly now, to what is revealed of the Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore is concerned, at least, with the subject of salvation: of all which relates to the person, character, mission, and work of the Lord Jesus, it secures a firm conviction that it is true and important. This is indispensable to saving faith. "If ye believe not that I am He, (said the Saviour to the Jews) ye shall die in your sins." (John viii. 24.) And yet it is not of itself, necessarily connected with saving faith. "The devils also believe and tremble;" (James ii. 19;) and from this alone, it is evident that something more is necessary than the strongest assent of the understanding.

2. The second thing implied in saving faith, then, is *a full and hearty compliance of the will and affections.* It is that exercise of the moral man, wherein, after a clear apprehen-

sion of the truths, relating to Christ, and our need of such a Saviour, on account of sin, guilt, condemnation, and impotency before God, the opposed and stubborn heart comes at length, through the assistance of Divine grace, to yield to this Saviour, and receive him with all its affections.

The *author* of saving faith, then, is God. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii. 8.)

The *efficient agent* (calling him by such a name to convey our meaning,) is the Holy Spirit: "we having the same spirit of faith." (2 Cor. iv. 13.) The *usual means* of producing faith is the word of God, who "of his own will begat us with the word of truth." (James i. 18.)

Its effects and evidences are a subdued will and changed views and affections, as in desire, love, hope and repentance. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

And *the final result* is salvation. We do not enter into the discussion of this point at all, but feel compelled to the conclusion, from simple scripture testimony, that the re-

sult of all true faith will be salvation to the subject. "He that believeth shall be saved." (Mark xvi. 16.) "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John x. 9.) The conclusion, then, is this, that evangelical or saving faith, consists in a full assent of the understanding to religious truth, and a compliance of the will and affections, as wrought by God, the Holy Ghost, and going forth in fruits of the Spirit unto salvation. This Paul testified both to Greeks and Jews, as altogether indispensable. It is indispensable now, my hearers: it is both the condition of salvation and the command of its author, that we have faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) And thus much of "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." Let us now attend to that which is inseparably connected with it.

II. Of repentance. "Testifying repentance towards God."

And here it will be necessary to premise, as we did of faith, that there are several kinds of repentance. There is a *temporary* and spurious repentance: as when a man orders his conduct for a season, as if he felt the influence of penitential motives; but

lacking them in reality, relapses into confirmed iniquity. Thus Ahab humbled himself and "walked softly" for a season, but soon evinced, by his after life, that he knew nothing of true repentance.

A national repentance is also spoken of in scripture; as when God says to Israel by the mouth of the prophet, "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin." (Ezek. xviii. 30.) Here, however, a general outward reformation of morals is intended, and as this might be with or without holy motives, there is nothing in the passage which designates evangelical repentance.

Again: in individual cases, there is often an exercise of mind called repentance, which, though it may accompany a saving change, does not necessarily imply it. This is *legal repentance*, and consists in that sorrow of soul, which arises from remorse, fear or shame, in the remembrance of our sins. All these may certainly exist where there is no true piety; and it is said, therefore, that Judas repented, and went and hanged himself. (Math. xxvii. 5.) But the repentance which the scriptures principally insist upon, and that alone which affords an evidence of renewed affections, is called *evangelical re-*

pentance. It is a true and sincere sorrow for sin arising from a view of its intrinsic vileness, and especially as considering its opposition to a holy and forgiving God.

This is that repentance which the Saviour insisted on when he said, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke xiii. 3—5.) It is that which all preachers of the gospel are every where and continually to urge as a duty. The disciples "went out, and preached that men should repent." (Mark vi. 12.) Paul and all the apostles "commanded all men, every where to repent." (Acts xvii. 30.) A doctrine so much insisted upon in scriptnre—a duty represented as altogether indispensable, it must be extremely important for us to understand with clearness.

Let us attempt to aid you in this attainment, by the following considerations: And here we remark,

1. That *the subjects of evangelical repentance are only sinners.* A holy being has no need of repentance, and cannot repent, in as much as repentance implies a recollection of conscious sin. This truth is self-evident, and would not now have been stated, had it not been for the purpose of showing a disposition of mind necessary in order to repen-

tance. We must be conscious that we are sinners : and remember, hearers, the higher you are in your own estimation, the farther you are from the requisites to repentance.

2. *The author of repentance is God—God the Saviour.* " Him hath God exalted, (says Peter) to give repentance and forgiveness of sins." (Acts v. 31.) He alone has power to effect this grace ; and he, as Mediator, has been raised to the right hand of Almighty God, for this object.

3. *The efficient agent*, in this grace, too, *is the Holy Spirit.* " I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace, and of supplications :" saith God ; and then it is added, " they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him." (Zech. xii. 10.)

Thus you observe, that true repentance is a sorrow for sins, on account of what they have done before God : they have made necessary the slaying his only beloved Son : this is an awful reason why we should repent of sin ; and the repenting of sin is so indispensable, as well as so great a work, that you have seen all the persons of the sacred Trinity concur in its production.

We may remark further, of repentance, that its *instrumental cause* is usually *God's*

preached word. It was when Peter's hearers had heard the word from his mouth, that "they were pricked in their heart, and cried, men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts ii. 37.) And finally, *the time for repentance is only the present life.* "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Eccl. ix. 10.) "*To day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." (Ps. xcv. 7, 8.) "But exhort one another daily, *while it is called to-day;* lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Heb. iii. 13.)

It is evident, then, from this enumeration of its properties, that evangenical repentance is *a saving grace.* It is an exercise which springs up only in the new heart. It is the same thing to urge a sinner to repent as it is to urge him to be regenerated; and the word, accordingly, which is used for evangenical repentance, imports, as regeneration does, *a new mind.* It is the commencement of an important exercise in the new man, and it continues, as to its effects, through life.

This is repentance; and as both repentance and faith are connected in our text, let us see, for a moment, how these two graces stand related to each other. And

First. Faith has certainly *a direct bearing upon repentance.* For instance, a man believes what God has said in relation to sin to be true; and just in proportion as he does believe it, he repents of sin. That Being is strictly just, and the belief of this awakens his examination of his own character: He believes God "will not clear the guilty;" and now his fears for the consequences of sin are dreadfully excited. Thus far, indeed, it is only legal repentance that he feels; but even this may put him upon his exertions and lead him to see his perishing need of a Saviour; and if now he be further led by the Spirit of God, to believe there is a Saviour—that he has died for the chief of sinners—that he is benevolent and infinite in pardo-n ing mercy—that he is willing even to receive *him* into his favour; when the Spirit leads the sinner thus far, he can no longer resist. He yields his opposition he accepts this Saviour and rejoices in him as altogether lovely.

This is faith; but will this be connected with repentance for sin? Certainly; the sinner just now begins to see what sin is. It appears "exceedingly sinful;" and he grieves and mourns for it—not now so much for fear or remorse, as because sin appears so unrea-

sonable; so opposite to God's holiness; so contrary to his goodness, and so cruel in the death of the atoning sacrifice. This is repentance, and thus it is that a believing view of God produces it. But

Secondly. Repentance has a like important bearing upon faith. As the principle of the new man operates by renewed repentance through life—and as so many occasions occur for its special exercise on account of remaining sin, this grace, without its relation to faith, would often leave us in despair. But in proportion as a man sorrows for sin, he is prepared again for believing views of Christ. He discovers him again to be an altogether suitable Saviour: his emptied soul receives him anew with larger and still larger thanksgivings for his mercy. Thus faith and repentance are reciprocally related. They are what God has joined together; and we hope you see, hearers, the fitness of the connexion.

Need it be added, that thus admitted to operate, they will certainly produce the fruits of holiness. If a man believes, he will repent: if he repents, he will certainly turn from sin to his Saviour; and thus it is that faith and repentance secure all the graces of sanctification.

You need not wonder then at the prominency which the scriptures give to these two duties. You need not wonder that Paul so earnestly "testified" of them, and that they are so often urged in the sermons of modern preachers. They are the cardinal points of christian Theology: they are the origin of motion in the whole machinery of practical godliness.

Let us now approach a close, and make some practical uses of this whole subject. And

1. In view of what has been said, we may understand, I think, *in what sense it is that God is sometimes said to repent.* It is said in scripture that God repented in relation to his threatenings against Nineveh, and on some other occasions. Now, since God cannot change, it is difficult with some, to conceive what is here meant by such a representation. For explaining this, let it be recollected, that, according to our explanation, there are, among others, two kinds of repentance—the one implying a change of mind, and the other an outward change of conduct, without any particular reference to disposition, good or bad. It may be important to remark further, that the original word which expresses the former of these exerci-

ses, is uniformly different from that which is used for the latter. The words are *metanoia* and *metameleia*. Now it is in this latter sense only, that the word repentance is applied to God. His *mind* never changes : there is with him no *metanoia ;* but he often changes his outward dispensations, or mode of dealing with a people, as he did with the people of Nineveh upon their repentance. There is a *metameleia* with God, an outward change of conduct, and this, in our language, is called this repentance.

2. But more directly to the practical object of all this discussion, let me hope *that you see clearly the indispensable necessity of repentance.* There is occasion for repenting, because sin is deserving of repentance : there is occasion, because repentance is commanded, and because it is dangerous not to repent; but especially is there occasion, because repentance, as now explained, is the something as a new mind; and because, without this new mind, no one can enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Friends and fellow sinners, you *must* repent. Whatever difficulties you may suggest—whatever excuses you may offer—and with whatever of inconsistent apathy you may hear and admit these truths, the strong

necessity of repentance is not removed. I "testify" to you this day, (and I would to God, I could do it with as much fidelity as Paul.) I testify to you, you must repent, or all perish. And

3. Is there no particular view of this subject, *which may help you to repent?* What is true repentance? We have explained it to be a sincere sorrow for sin, on account of its intrinsic vileness, and particularly in the melting aspect of its having crucified the Redeemer. The real penitent sees sin in this light, and mourns. But the essential nature of sin is the same, hearers, whether you discover its turpitude or not. Look at sin, then, as the murderer of the Son of God. Turn away, if you choose, from all other parts of its history: pass over all this foe of God and man had done for four thousand years of cruel domination, and fasten on one of its acts in the death of Christ. See it abasing, causing to suffer, agonize, and bleed, a spotless, dignified, infinitely excellent and almighty victim! Imagine you witness the scene—you hear his groans—you shudder at the thrust which pierced him—start horrour-struck from the spouting blood, and tremble in amaze at the unnatural accompaniments of the Saviour's death! Say then, in

your meditation, I did this horrid deed! *My* sins have pierced this bleeding victim! and oh, sinner, sinner, will you not "mourn for him?" will you not go away from the cross, smiting upon your breast, like the astonished centurion, and crying with weeping penitence, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

4. And *finally:* there may be some who do thus mourn for sin, already; but who have not yet been conscious of resting on the Saviour of sinners, and of course have no true consolation. To such our subject affords encouragement.

I believe there may be faith in existence, where the subject does not know it, because he has not yet attended to its reflex act upon himself. I think I have known such cases. I have seen those who grieved for sin, but had yet no hope in a Redeemer. It was not fear, it was not remorse alone, that seemed to afflict that soul; but it was because sin was against so good, so great and so holy a God. Oh, it was that his sins had been so many—that they had even crucified the Lord of glory! Did I hear aright? Is there indeed such a mourner? Then has that soul sincere repentance: then has he faith: then

let him look up with comfort to the blest Redeemer. I testify to that soul, that his sins are forgiven. Where there is repentance there is faith; and "he that believeth shall be saved." Amen.

LECTURE XI.

JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION.

ROMANS v. 10.

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

I HAVE chosen this text as the foundation of a lecture on justification and sanctification, because it seems fairly to include both those subjects. Like faith and repentance, these two doctrines stand so intimately related, that it was judged expedient to discuss them together. They are certainly connected in many other passages of scripture, as well as that chosen for our text; and if we can first present a fair exposition of what the apostle here teaches, the foundation will be then laid for inferring all the essential points respecting the doctrines in question.

For understanding the full import of the passage, we have only to look into its connexions, and especially those of the preceding chapter. The writer had there been discussing the nature of justification by faith; and he comes now to speak of the preciousness and extent of its privileges.—(" Therefore, says the being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." He afterwards describes these privileges, as felt in every condition of life—extending to the whole elec-family of Christ; and, in our text, as inseparably connected with salvation. " For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

The phrase *reconciled to God,* is here used to express what had before been meant by justification; and the salvation spoken of in the close of the verse, does include, at least, the idea of sanctification. The object of the writer is then to affirm, that, in God's plan of mercy, sanctification does certainly follow from justification; and he reasons for it, by glancing at the circumstances and agency of each operation. If, while we were *enemies*, we were *justified* by *the death of*

Christ, much more, *being justified*, we shall be perfectly sanctified through *his life.*

He reasons from greater to smaller things —from certain to more certain—and his representation may be considered as standing thus : When you were dead in sins, you were justified and made alive by the mercy of God : shall then that life not be continued now, that it is once begun ? When you were enemies, you were made *friends* to God. Now being friends, shall he not much rather raise and consummate that friendship ?— Moreover, it was by Christ's *death* that this justification was procured : shall not *his life* in heaven, which is to be the moving cause of all blessings, secure your sanctification rather ? In one word, if a dying Saviour could justify and make men friends to God, while they were enemies, shall it not much rather be, that those who are friends, be sanctified and saved through the prevailing intercession of him, *of whom it is testified that he liveth ?*

Having thus stated what we suppose to be Paul's meaning in the text, and seen that justification and sanctification are evidently the subjects of it, let us proceed to draw out the principal things, which enter into the doctrines, by way of inference. Not an in-

ference alone, however, shall we rely for these important truths. If they could all be shown to flow from our text, I should not venture to state one inference on such a subject, which could not be corroborated by other passages of scripture.

I. Let us begin with JUSTIFICATION. And

1. *The subjects of justification.* It appears that they are *sinners.* "If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled," (says our text:) *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* (Verse 6th.) And again, *God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* (Verse 8th.)

By this it is not meant, as some imagine, that God's children were justified from eternity; for really and essentially, they were not: nor yet is it meant that men may be justified and continue ungodly; but only that the justifying grace of God found them in such a state; that it did not wait for them to become holy, and then justify for that holiness' sake; but rather that it imputed to them the righteousness of Christ, *as they were,* and by that act began to make them holy.

2. *The nature of justification.* Strictly speaking, justification is the declaring of a sinner to be pardoned and accepted in the view of

God's law, and might properly be referred to that distinguished transaction, wherein Almighty God will publickly welcome his children at the last day; but the justification spoken of in our context seems rather to refer to that aspect of it presented by the actual clearing the sinner from condemnation, by reckoning to him the righteousness of Christ. It is called *imputation;* and we are told that Abraham and David, under a former dispensation, were thus justified. (See chapter iv. verses 3d and 6th.)

To be justified, in a religious sense, therefore, is to have the righteousness of another reckoned to us, whenever and wherever it is done. It is called imputation, or *reckoning* us as righteous, when, strictly speaking, we are not righteous; and this is done, when the poor sinner, owing ten thousand forfeitures to the law, when he has nothing to pay, is nevertheless provided for, and cleared, and blessed with positive happiness, by setting down to his account the merits of another.

We shall understand this further, when we have seen,

3. *What is the ground of the sinner's justification.* This is undoubtedly the righteousness of Christ. "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," (says our text:) and

again, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. v. 19.) "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;" (21st verse.) "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;" (Rom. iii. 24;) "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."—(Rom. iv. 25.)

This is the true and only ground of our justification before God. The righteousness of Christ, including his whole work of obedience and suffering, is imputed or reckoned to us, as our own; and in virtue of this we stand cleared from the demands of the law, and acceptable in the sight of God. Let us now observe,

4. In the fourth place, *by what instrumentality* this righteousness becomes ours. It is apprehended by faith. "He that believeth—shall be saved." (Mark xvi. 16.) "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 39.) "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.)

Faith, or trust in Christ, with a cordial approbation of his character, work and government, is the act by which this righteousness is apprehended. We stand before condemned and miserable in his presence. Justification by another is seen to be necessary: the provisions in Christ are seen to offer this justification, and faith, as an instrument, takes hold of it.

5. It follows, *fifthly*, that the *author* of this justification is God: He is the author, in the strict sense, for he will declare our justification at the last day: in the efficient sense, also; for he gives that very faith by which the righteousness of Christ is apprehended. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii. 8.)

How completely does this take out of our own hands, not only the meritorious, but the efficient cause of justification! We need a righteousness which only could procure: we need faith as the only instrument which can apprehend it when provided; and that faith itself must be given us—*it* is the gift of God; certainly, and in the highest degree, *it is God that justifieth.* (Rom. viii. 33.)

And *finally*, the immediate *effect* of justification is, *that there is a change in the sinner's*

state before God. He is *reconciled*, as it is expressed in our text. He has received the *atonement*, as it stands in the verse following: *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them;* and this individual has now proved a personal application of that great truth. From being under the curse, he is considered as cleared and innocent: from being an enemy, he is regarded as a friend of God: from disinclination and hatred to his service and character, he has commenced the active exercises of duty and complacence towards that glorious Being.

The effects, when continued, constitute sanctification; and to the consideration of that part of our subject, we now proceed.

II. *Respecting* SANCTIFICATION.

1. And here we infer *first*, something of its *nature*. Sanctification is the further carrying on of that work of purifying the sinner, which is commenced in the moment of his essential justification; of course it is subsequent, in the order of nature, to that event. It is a living and operative principle kept alive by faith: it is the continuance and growth of that new nature which is begun at regeneration; and as it is universal, and carried on through life unto perfection, it is

called in our text, *being saved:* much more *shall we be saved through his life.*

2. *The ground of this grace*, then, secondly, is the living *power and intercession of Christ.* As we were justified by his *death*, is the representation of our text, so we shall be saved or sanctified by his *life*—(i. e.) by his exaltation and continual intercession with the Father, on our behalf. "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. vii. 25.) And as life is more efficient than death—as Christ's exaltation was a higher pledge of power than his debasement, this is the ground of the strong assurance in our text. MUCH MORE, *being justified, we shall be saved by his life.* The same ground of confidence is given by the Redeemer himself: "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John. xiv. 19.) His resurrection was an infallible proof of his Sonship with God; and in that he is alive forever more—having proved his Almighty power and fulfilled the condition on which his children were to be saved, they have both the pledge and the example for rising *into newness of life.* But

3. *The immediate and efficient author of sanctification is the Holy Spirit.* "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth,

which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (John xv. 26.) "Because *God* (saith Paul) hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 13.)

Such is the order of operations among the persons of the sacred Trinity; and in this order, the work of sanctification is assigned to the Holy Spirit. His it is to enlighten christians—renew their faith in Christ—help their prayers—comfort them in trouble—subdue their corruptions—strengthen them against temptation—and finally, present them *spotless and unblameable at the coming of the Lord.*

This work is commenced at the new birth, and only finished at the moment of death: it is universal, as to the habit and influence of it; and as the word of inspiration is a principal instrument for effecting it in the hands of the Spirit, it is sometimes called *the washing of water by the word.* (See Eph. v. 26.)

Finally: the result of this work is *salvation.* "We shall be saved by his life." By this we understand that sanctification, in every instance, where it is really begun, shall one day be made perfect: that, after all his mistakes and delinquencies, through receiv-

ing faith and renewed repentance, every truly justified person shall be helped against his enemies—and finally come off victorious. This certainly appears from several considerations.

1. From the consideration that both sanctification and justification have the same author. It is God that justifieth : it is God, and not man, that conducts the work of sanctification : it may therefore be certain.

2. From the fact, that these two gifts are so often connected, as we have seen in the same promise of scripture. " Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ ; and rejoice in hope of the glory of God—saved through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth ; for if, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." These passages seem to take it for granted, that where one of these gifts exists, the other is always connected ; and they are so connected in the covenant mercy of God. " All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John. vi. 37.)

3. The certainty of this perfect sanctification follows from *the intercession of Christ.* This is the ground so strongly confided to in our text—*we shall be saved by his life ;* but let us consider what Christ says in one place of his intercession. " I knew that thou hearest me always." (John. xi. 42.) If then it can be shown that Christ does ask for the perfect sanctification of his children, it will indubitably follow, that it shall be attained. But we certainly have the example of such a prayer. " Father, (says the Saviour) I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory." (John. xvii. 24.) This is that *will*, by which the apostle says, *we are sanctified ;* (Heb. x. 10 ;) and it makes the true believer's sanctification sure, as it is that the covenant of God and the power of our heavenly intercessor cannot fail. I will only add,

4. A few of the numerous *promises* on this point, and close this part of our subject.

" The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." (Job. xvii. 9.) " The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord ; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down ; for

the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Ps. xxxvii. 23.) "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John. vi. 54.) "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John. x. 29.)

These promises are exceedingly strong and explicit; and now, as if God would even give securities for their fulfilment, we have, in Hebrews vi. 17, 18, the following remarkable passage: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

The *two* immutable things, by which God has been willing to fortify the confidence of his people, seem to be *his counsel*, and the *oath* by which he ratified that counsel: until, therefore, the counsel of God shall fail, and his *oath* be broken, the true believer shall not loose his inheritance. His sanctification is assured by all that his existence—by all that his justification is secured: the immu-

table God has promised it, and though the mountains be removed—the sun uncentered, and the world burned as an oven—they that trust in the Lord shall never be confounded.

REFLECTIONS.

1. *What a glorious object is that which is aimed at in the work now considered!* The case presented is that of a condemned and unholy being: the object is to clear him of his guilt and prepare him for heaven. The work of justification and sanctification provides for both. The creature is justified by reckoning to him the righteousness of Christ; his pollutions are washed away by the operations of the Holy Spirit; and we are then presented with the surprising spectacle of an unworthy, weak, and degraded sinner, made like to God in holiness—acknowledged as one of his children, and received as a fit inhabitant of heaven! Surely this is an interesting and glorious object. And now,

2. *How secure and suitable is the ground upon which it rests!* God, in order that the ruined happiness of the creature may be restored, has undertaken for it himself. He provides the Saviour; and because he knows that the creature would never be interested in Him, by his own exertions, He *applies* the bene-

fit by the same power, and then justifies on account of that application. This begins the good work in us, and then we are permitted to reason from such a comment as well as to rest on his positive promise, that he will *perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.* Every part is glorious to God—every part is safe and comfortable to the subject. Who would not prefer to have God save them in this way, (using, in the mean time, their own exertions, as means under his directions) rather than to take the work into their own hands, only to mar and defeat it! But

3. *With what anxiety and correctness should we attempt that obedience, in which sanctification is carried on, and by which our christian character is to be tested! Every plant* (says our Saviour) *that is in me, beareth fruit;* but every plant that is *not of his Father's planting, shall be plucked up.* A double argument for obedience in professed christians, is thus afforded: those who *are* planted of God, *will* bear fruit; and if any do *not* bear fruit, they are addressed with this motive of alarm: "They are not of God's planting."

Most certainly, my brethren, if we would safely trust that we are Christ's, we must be sure that we bear the fruits of holiness: if

we would indulge the glorious hope, that we are one day to be made perfect in Christ Jesus, we must give evidence by a voluntary obedience, that he has already *begun a good work in us.*

It is sometimes imagined that the doctrines we have been discussing lead to carelessness and sin. Rightly understood and received, they certainly do not. Indeed, I can hardly conceive of stronger assurances, than are thus afforded in favour of universal obedience. It springs out of the very nature of the graces in question. It is fortified by every consideration of anxiety and fear. And

Finally, to those who are thus exhibiting the evidences of their real union to the Redeemer, *what unspeakable consolations are such doctrines calculated to administer!* Remember, dear brethren, God has not sent you on *your own charges* in this christian warfare. He considered the work ere he began it—he began it with a design to finish, and he has not only promised the end, but the means through which it is to be accomplished. "Here is firm footing—here is solid rock."

God, *who loved you with an everlasting love—with loving kindness* has already *drawn you*, and the promise of his word is, that *being jus-*

tified you shall *much rather be saved.* Yes, christian, real perserving christian—you are safe—always safe—for the *eternal God* is *thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*

"A feeble saint shall win the day,
"Though death and hell oppose the way."

These things are true, and "God willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of salvation the immutability of his promise, has confirmed the same by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Amen.

LECTURE XII.

THE RESURRECTION.

JOHN xi. 25, 26.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

The christian religion is the only religion on earth, which teaches the doctrine of a resurrection of the body. Other systems indeed have conceived of changes after death. We have heard of purgatorial advances in an after life among the ancient heathen, and of the doctrine of transmigration, or changes from animal to animal, among modern idolators; but these all were changes, which they imagined only of the immortal spirit. That *bodies* should be raised after being turned to dust, seems never to have been conceived by the heathen. It is purely a doctrine of revelation. On this

account, therefore, and also because we can conceive nothing of the manner of a resurrection, from any thing we have yet witnessed, it is necessary that we confine ourselves, with great fidelity, to the scriptures, while speaking on this subject. It is of the nature of a future prophecy: no part of it has yet been fulfilled: and any thing like speculation, here, would be as presumptuous as to attempt fixing the end of the world.

Carefully attending to these precautions, we hope, however, that the following points of discussion may be safely attempted:

I. *The certainty of a bodily resurrection:*

II. *The author, or meritorious and efficient cause of this resurrection:*

III. *Something of its mode and circumstances.*

I. THERE WILL BE A BODILY RESURRECTION.

It may be that some of those scriptures, which we are accustomed to quote for this doctrine, had a primary reference to events which were to be witnessed in time. Of this class is the prophecy in Ezekiel, whereby the vision of a resurrection of *dry bones*—the revival of Israel's dead hope, seems to be the immediate object in view. And so also, it may be, in the language of David, in the xvii. Psalm. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfi-

ed, when I awake, with thy likeness." Here, and in some other passages, perhaps, the prophecy is to be understood as first importing some future prosperity of the house of Israel, or of an individual, after a season of adversity; and this is figuratively represented as a resurrection. But an attentive reader of the Bible can hardly fail to see that something more and better is meant. These passages do, undoubtedly, contain a *type*, at least, of a literal resurrection; and therefore they are usually quoted with that reference.

But we have more unequivocal passages, even in the Old Testament. Job could say, (ch. xix. 25, 26) "For I know that my Redeemer liveth: *in my flesh* shall I see God."

And Isaiah, in one of the most beautiful of all scriptural metaphors, has introduced the Redeemer and the church, as holding the following dialogue: "Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified: thou hast removed it far unto all the ends of the earth. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them." (Ch. xxvi. 15, 16.) The Redeemer answers: "Thy dead men shall live," &c. (verse 19;) and filled with joy and anima-

tion at the prospect—the church rejoins; "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; and the earth shall cast out her dead."

This is the reading given by the great commentator, *Vitringa;* and if correct, the passage, as well as the other from Job, refers directly to a literal resurrection.

But let us now proceed to the New Testament, where life and immortality are more fully brought to light. Here it will be sufficient, merely to enumerate several passages, and to defend them as we pass along, from erroneous constructions.

Says the Saviour, (John v. 25,) "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." And then, lest this work which, thus far, is undoubtedly to be understood of calling dead sinners to spiritual life, should be considered too great for the Redeemer to perform, he informs them, (verses 28, 29,) that the time is coming, when "all that are in their *graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." In another place, (ch. xii. 24,) he says, in reference to his

own death—(and as he is *the first fruit of the resurrection*, it will apply equally to all his children.) "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" (i. e.) it shall be raised again, and in greater glory. Our text is also in point; and if we consider the occasion upon which it was said, has great force. "I am, (says the Redeemer, at the grave of Lazarus,) "I am the resurrection and the life." And why did he *then* say it? It was to comfort the sisters of Lazarus, under the loss of their brother; and having said it, he proceeded immediately to raise the body of Lazarus, in proof and fulfilment of his own declaration. Can it possibly be doubted, then, that Jesus meant to teach the doctrine of a bodily resurrection by this saying?

It is still maintained by some, nevertheless, that we are only to expect some spiritual or figurative resurrection hereafter; and we will suggest further the following considerations:

What is meant by calling Christ "the *first fruits* of them that slept," and by saying of saints, that they shall *awake in the likeness of Christ*, if it be not that they shall rise,

not only in virtue, but in the similitude of Christ's rising?

So strong is Paul's conviction of the force of this argument, that he deems the whole truth and consolation of the gospel to depend upon it. "Now if Christ be preached, that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." (1 Cor. xv. 12, 13, 14.) And still further on he affirms, (verse 18,) that on this supposition, (i. e.) if there were no resurrection, "they also, which were fallen asleep in Christ, are perished." *What*, perished? their souls? no; for these, Paul was persuaded, "while they were *absent* from the *body*, were *present* with the Lord." It was the *body*, then, to which he had reference; and these, he tells us, are perished—and all the precious hopes we hold for our bodies are perished with them, unless there be a resurrection.

And finally, to remove all reasonable doubt on this point, in the progress of this description, the apostle speaks explicitly of the *body*, which is "saved," and the *body*

which is " raised." Not in all respects the same body, he does not seem to me to say; but a *body for a body*, rising from the *grave*—and not a spirit coming down from heaven. It will be after the similitude of a stalk of grain that springs from the perished kernel and this *body*, " God giveth, (says he) and to every seed his own *body*." Whatever difficulties we may find, in explaning the mode of this resurrection, one thing at least, seems certain—that the apostle is speaking of a literal and not a figurative resurrection; and a resurrection not of the spirit, but of the body. This is sufficient for our present purpose ; and we hope the first position may now be considered as established. Yes, the dead shall rise, whatever difficulties attend the subject. Though, in the words of an author, " the sentence of death be just—though the effects of death be dismal—though the bonds of death be strong—though they be dead and buried—dead and putrified—though the dust be so scattered and mixed with common dust, that no art of man can distinguish, much less separate them : put the case as strong as you will—it is made as nothing of in scripture"—" thy dead men *shall* live."

Nor let it stagger our faith, dear brethren —the cause is assigned: "I am, (says the Redeemer) the resurrection and the life." But this is the second point which was to be considered.

II. THE MERITORIOUS AND EFFICIENT CAUSE OF THE RESURRECTION.

When man was in paradise, there was provided for him a tree, called *the tree of life* —the fruit of which was probably intended to preserve his immortality; but when he fell, this tree of life was prohibited, and man sunk into a state of death, which must forever have tyrannised over him, soul and body. When you read, therefore, in the New Testament, of *another tree of life*, "in the midst of the paradise of God," do you not recognize in it the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to restore the ruins of the fall? And do you not see, even in this figure, a striking illustration of the reason for calling Him *the author of the resurrection?*

In like manner, and at this early period, it was promised, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head"—(i. e.) as the apostle understands it, "would destroy the works of the devil;" but one of the works of the devil is the miseries and shame produced by natural death. It was prophe-

cied, therefore, by the great Redeemer, "Oh death, *I* will be thy plagues ; O grave, I will be thy destruction !" This, our great Deliverer actually did, when he bore the sharp sting of imputed guilt, in the garden's agonies—when he suffered to the full satisfaction of the law on the cross—and when he rose to conquer the powerful foe of God and man, in his ascension through the air. It is with reference, therefore, to this view of the subject, that at the close of his account of the resurrection, the apostle seems to exult over death and the grave, as if both were conquered and rendered harmless. Oh death, "*I* will be thy plagues ; O grave, I will be thy destruction." "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It may be granted, now, that according to these prophecies, and this fulfilment of them, Jesus might be said to be the author of the resurrection in a spiritual sense alone ; but the deliverance, and therefore the authorship must be extended *to bodies also.* Take the following proofs of this : These bodies feel the effects of sin, and therefore the consequences of sin cannot be considered as wholly destroyed until the body is raised and glorified : these bodies are also represented

in scripture as Christ's property. "Ye are Christ's, therefore glorify God, with your bodies and spirits, which are his." "Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of God." "*My* dead body shall they own," says Christ, in the prophetic dialogue to which we have before referred. Will Christ suffer his own property to be lost to him in the grave? Shall he not raise members of his own body, and flesh and bones? and if he do so, is he not the author of the resurrection to bodies also?

And there is another sense in which this work belongs to him. Not only by prediction and by a meritorious fulfilment of the prediction, is Christ the author of the resurrection; it is by his *efficiency also.* The literal resurrection will be wrought by him. It is Christ, (says the apostle) "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." (Phil. iii. 21.) The judgment is committed to him, as his appropriate work, "because he is the Son of man." It is "the voice of the *Son of God* also, which they shall hear that are in their graves;" as it was certainly proper that he who merited, and he who began the recovery of his children from death, should complete it by exercising the Almighty power, which is to

produce the resurrection. To express this, he said, " I am the resurrection and the life ;" and then, instead of waiting until the end of all things, as Martha had supposed he must, for such a manifestation, he instantly gives a pledge of his office-work by raising Lazarus from the grave.

Here was a most stupendous exhibition of the power of the Redeemer : here was a lively similitude of that great concluding work of wonder, when the voice of the uncreated arch-angel shall be heard from the clouds of heaven, and collect the scattered dust of sleeping millions from the tomb ! !

If we now understand, in any clearer degree, how Christ is the *meritorious and efficient author* of the resurrection, we may proceed to the last particular.

III. To consider something of the MODE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE RESURRECTION.

And here, more than in any other part of my subject, I feel the necessity of being self-diffident, and shall confine myself as closely as possible to the plain instructions of scripture.

1. *In the first place*, this resurrection *begins* with the spirit. Though treating principally of a corporeal resurrection, I feel it a duty to begin here, because it is so considered in our text. Having said that " He was the

resurrection and the life," the Redeemer affirms, "he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." This undoubtedly refers to the new life of grace, to which the saint is created. Here the resurrection, as is fitting, *begins:* "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" but it does not rest here—and therefore the Saviour adds: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, *shall never die:*" (i. e. shall be finally raised from the dead and never perish. It is precisely like the parallel passage in John—the Saviour first affirms a spiritual resurrection through faith in him; and then, as the possession of the soul implies his property in every thing else, extends it to the body also. The resurrection of the saints must begin then with their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and then it proceeds to embrace the body also. The literal resurrection, however, will not be confined to the saints.

2. And we say, therefore, in the second place, *that this rising will be universal.*

Why the wicked as well as the righteous will be raised, we need not be very solicitous to know. It is rational to suppose, however, that as they have a connexion with the righteous here, whereby the righteous

are ultimately benefitted, it may be so in the resurrection; and it is very clear, further, that they *must* be raised at the general judgment, if God is to judge them according to deeds done in the body, and be glorified in that great event. We are sure, at any rate, that they *will* be raised; for "*all* that are in their graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." The wicked shall rise, it is probable, in forms far different from those of the righteous. They shall rise subsequently, in point of time—remaining behind, perhaps, to begin their hell in a burning world—while the righteous are already with the Lord in the air—and suffering the anguish already, of conscious guilt, shame, and everlasting contempt. (See 1 Cor. xv. 23, and Dan. xii. 2.)

3. *Circumstance:* This resurrection shall be *at the end of the world.* There is, indeed, something said in scripture of *a first resurrection*, at the commencement of the millenium; but there are, to me, the strongest objections to considering this as meant of a literal resurrection. I believe the first resur-

rection, spoken of in Revelation, has commenced already, in the revival of the spirit of primitive christianity; and I suppose the raising of all the dead will be at the end of the world: then the *last* trumpet shall blow: then at the close of all sublunary things, in the winding up of the last earthly dispensation—He to whom is given this work of raising the dead, shall arouse them by *one* voice; gather them in *one* assembly, and in *one* great and magnificent era, called by way of eminence, "*the day* of the Lord," shall finish the work of mediatorial glory.

4. Should it be asked in the *fourth place*, with what bodies the dead will rise, it is but little we have to say in answer. It would be easy to say, with Paul, that it is a *spiritual* body; but what is a spiritual body? We have, I presume, no intelligent notion of such a body, and all we do is to speak by way of negative, and say, that bright glorious body, which will arise from the identity of the body left in the grave, will *not* be like flesh and blood, for these "cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven."

And here I would pause to say, that there is a language sometimes used on this subject, which is not very scriptural, or perhaps safe: we often speak as if the same corporeal sub-

stance was to rise from the grave; and we talk of dissevered limbs and scattered bones, as flying through the air, to be reunited. The representation, I think, is not warranted by scripture; and all we can affirm on this subject is, that for every body deposited in the grave, and *from that very body*, as far as essential identity is concerned, there shall arise a spiritual, bright and glorious body at the resurrection.

5. *And for what purpose shall this general resurrection take place?* It will be, that saints may be made fully happy: It will be that the last triumph of death may be destroyed: It will be that the wicked may be judged: and it will be general, at one time, in order, as it seems to me, that the world may see and acknowledge together the righteousness of the ways of God.

Then shall we see, my brethren, what a reach of power and authority that must be which can congregate and overlook at once this countless multitude, what is that omniscience, which can search and try every individual, in all their characters and relations; and what that wisdom which, outgoing, and finally disentangling this endless maze of human conduct and events, shall cause all things to work for his own glory,

and the infinite good of his creatures Nothing—nothing will so glorify God; nothing will give us such extended views of his endless power and wisdom, as when we shall see him judging the world.

And what, *finally*, will be the *ultimate consequences* of this resurrection and judgment? On this point, our text leaves us at no loss. He that has believed while living, shall be fixed in blessedness and *never perish.* The wicked, by a parity of reasoning, and according to other express scriptures—the wicked, who have not believed while living, shall be driven away in their wickedness, *to shame and everlasting contempt.*

We may be sure of this from two additional considerations. The first is that in the text from Daniel, as well as a powerful one from Matthew—*the same duration* is given to the perdition of the wicked, as to the glory of the saints: "some shall awake to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." And the other consideration is, that this word *everlasting*, when applied to any era beyond time, does, according to the soundest criticism, import a duration absolutely without end. Here then we have the grand results of this great transaction. *The righteous are confirmed in*

eternal blessedness. It was not enough, that they lived the new life of grace on earth : It was not enough that, believing on Christ, they were sustained through all the trials of their pilgrimage. By him they are now to receive their eternal fixedness of perfection. Drawing from this exhaustless fountain, they live and grow, and are happy still; running out a whole eternity of happy existence—"because they believed in him, they shall never perish." But *the wicked* "are not so." They who believed *not*, while living, shall perish, sinking bottomless deeps of distance from heaven down—down they measure their awful pitch of woe, by the endless line of the happy life of heaven. Surely here are results worthy of all the magnitude which is given to this great event, and all the long train of preparation which has, for ages, been making for it. And now to attempt an application of this solemn subject.

1. What dignity and glory does it give, *in the first place, to the character of Christ !* "He is the resurrection and the life"—the author and finisher of this great work. He undertook officially, to destroy the works of the devil, and of course to abolish death : He effected, meritoriously, the ground of this, by his own obedience and sufferings :

He begins it efficiently, by quickening sinners through faith; in the end, his own power shall literally raise the dead, and then supply his saints from the same fountain of energies and vitality, so that they never perish. Do we want any further proof that Christ is an infinite being? Does he ever appear more glorious than when we hear him say, "I am the resurrection and the life, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never perish?" There is a rising strength and glory in the very description!

2. And now, *what a ground of confidence and consolation must this doctrine afford to the true christian.* It comes to him on a subject, in which, most of all, he feels the need of consolation. It comes to him on a subject for which all other sources of instruction are silent or inefficient. Placed in a world where he is continually conversant with death—from which world he sees he must soon depart by death himself—oh, how desirable is it to know something of the doctrine of a resurrection! How natural to ask, as he sees the grave closing on all that is living around him—is this, this then, the end of all corporeal glory? our pomp, our beauty, our high raised hopes of earthly goodness, do they end here forever?

"Ah! in those silent realms of night
Shall peace and hope no more arise!
No future morning light the tomb,
Nor day-star gild the morning skies?

"Shall spring the faded world revive?
Shall waning moons their light return?
Again shall setting suns ascend
And the lost day anew be born?

"Shall life revisit dying worms,
And spread the joyful insect's wing?
And oh, shall man awake no more,
To see thy face, thy name to sing?"

Look down then into the grave, with this inquiry, but accompanied also, with the instructions of our subject: Look into it as the cold and lonely bed, where you must soon rest for yourselves; but behold, gleaming and gladening upon its darkness, the light of immortal blessedness. Says the Redeemer, "I am the resurrection and the life." Look down to that grave as the rallying place; the dark and dreary sepulchre of all your dear friends and relatives! You cannot look with more anxiety, my brethren, with more misgivings, than did Mary and Martha, into the tomb of Lazarus; and yet, if you now look with that faith, which Christ inculcated, you will see all its gloom give way: you will hear him declaring, "whosoever believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;" and remembering now,

who it is that says this, you will feel that no difficulties of the process—no depths of its mystery—no strength of the destroyer—no duration of their slumbers—no scattered or loathsome condition of their ashes, shall prevent your seeing all your pious friends again, clothed in immortal beauty. Surely, here is consolation adequate to all the sorrows, which death and bereavement can bring upon us: it is that strong consolation, which Jesus seems to labour to produce in us, by the remarkable reiterations of our text.

And *finally*, brethren, let me close *by asking each one the question of our Saviour in the text:* "Believest thou this?" Do you really believe, that a mighty scheme of mercy has been set in operation, the object of which is to destroy the power of death? Do you really believe that Jesus Christ is the meritorious and efficient author of this work? Do you really believe that it is only he "who *liveth* and believeth," that shall be happy after the resurrection? and do you really believe that this great transaction is indeed to be witnessed by us? Do you truly expect to see Jesus revealed in the clouds of heaven—hear his voice bursting the tombs asunder—see countless millions from earth's and sea's remotest bounds, flocking to his tribu-

nal—behold all your departed kindred—inhabit your own untried spiritual body—enter into bliss, and draw the life of ages from your union to the Redeemer—or sink, remote and succourless, in the dark waves of perdition forever? Do you really expect all these things? *Believest thou this?* Then what are your feelings, and what your conduct and preparation? Amen.

LECTURE XIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

MATTHEW XXV. 31—TO THE END.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren,

ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

We come now, in the last of our course of lectures, to speak of THE DOCTRINE OF A GENERAL JUDGMENT; and we have,

I. The following reasons to offer, *for believing that the very solemn and remarkable passage, which has now been read,* REFERS TO THAT EVENT.

1. *The connexion and occasion of the passage, evidently prove this.*

In the 24th, and a part of this chapter, the Saviour is speaking of the calamities which were coming upon the Jewish nation, and adds solemn admonitions for watchfulness unto that great event. He has given us a literal prediction of the destruction of the temple—the signs to precede that event, and the distress which should follow; and

he now subjoins the parable of the *ten virgins*, and that of the *talents*—closing the whole with the description contained in our text. Now, it is a well known principle in the language of prophecy, that temporal events, which are similar, are predicted as types or representations of greater events to follow; as when David predicts the reign of Christ by the glory of Solomon—and as the millenium is often foretold in the same passages which relate to the return from the captivity of Babylon.

This being understood, what is more evident, than that these predictions of Jerusalem's overthrow, and the admonitions which are connected, relate ultimately to the general judgment? not now to insist that there are many representations connected with them, altogether too strong, and of too general application for any other event.

Add, moreover, that one part of the very question of the disciples, upon which the Saviour gives this whole discourse, had been, "what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the *end of the world?*" and we can hardly imagine, that the Saviour would close without alluding to that event. This view of the subject is so satisfactory to me, that I confess, if this passage be not intend-

ed of the day of general judgment, I see not how any passage of the Bible can be shown to be.

2. *There are things affirmed in this description, which have not yet taken place.* "All nations" have not yet been "assembled before the Son of man," for judgment: They have never yet, been "separated," into two great classes, "one on his right hand, and one on his left." The righteous have not been publickly acknowledged before his throne, being rather as yet, "the hidden ones" of his affection, "whom the world knoweth not:" nor have the wicked nations ever yet made their unavailing excuse for neglecting the Saviour; for to the most of them he never has yet been proclaimed. All these representations, however, are here given, as belonging to the transaction; and no license or ingenuity of figurative construction in language, can persuade me that they are intended of events *which are past.*

3. There are things affirmed in this description, which *could not, in the nature of the case, be affirmed of any event, but that of a future, general judgment.* Let any other application be supposed, and observe what difficulties will follow. For instance, suppose the overthrow of Jerusalem, and the disper-

sion of the Jews be meant: I have then to ask, did these Jews make any plea on that occasion—and are they already *gone into everlasting punishment?* The answer is, that so far from pleading for the favour of Christ, they still continued to reject him; and instead of enduring everlasting punishment they are yet to return to their inheritance. Or suppose, with some, that this judgment is only intended of the *sins* of men: Is sin then to be arraigned—or has it yet been arraigned as a *separate existence?* is sin to be condemned for not having fed, and clothed, and visited, and comforted the Saviour? It is too absurd: there is one easy and natural way of understanding the passage, and all others are inexplicable, if not presumptuous and wicked.

4. As the things here described are such as have not yet transpired, and such as, from the nature of the case, cannot be applied to any other than a general judgment—*the descriptions do*, on the other hand, *agree with what is elsewhere represented of this event.* For instance, we have here "the Son of man, coming and sitting upon a throne:" So Daniel in his vision, "beheld, until the thrones were cast down (or *pitched* as it should have been rendered,) and the ancient

of days did sit." (Dan. vii. 9.) Here, again, "holy angels" are with him, and "all nations assembled" before that Judge; and so also, in the other instance, "thousands of thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand, stand before him." Here the wicked *make their plea, and are silenced and condemned.* In another scripture, we hear of a time when "every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." (See Rom. iii. 19, with ii. 15, 16.) Here is *a separation of the whole world* into two great classes, according to their characters, with the final confirmation of both punishment and reward; and so, abundantly, in other scriptures—"They that have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John v. 29, and Dan. xii. 2.) To this remarkable agreement of our text with other representations of scripture, and to all else that has now been offered for understanding it, as relating to the general judgment, let us add a few explicit passages:

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above,

and to the earth that he may judge his people." (Ps. l. 3, 4.) "But now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts xvii. 30, 31.) "For we must all," says the apostle, "appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether it *be* good or bad." (1 Cor. v. 10.) "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (1. Thes. iv. 16.) "And I saw a great white throne" (says John) "and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it;

and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second deat . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 11, to the end.)

[Additional passages for this doctrine—John xiv. 3. Acts i. 11. Phil. iii. 20, 21. Tit. ii. 13, and 2 Pet. iii. 10, 11, 12, 13.]

We must think now, that the passage chosen for our text is proved to refer to the general judgment, and that the doctrine is established of course, as well from that as from other scriptures. Not to believe it, it would be necessary to break in upon all the established usages of prophetic language—to show that events have already taken place of which history gives no account—to apply figures and representations in a way that is greatly absurd—to take away a part of prophecy relating to futurity, which perfectly agrees with other prophecies ; and to controvert scriptures so plain on this subject, that if they do not affirm a future general judgment, we cannot conceive of language which should affirm it.

Supposing the certainty of a general judgment to be established, therefore, and that our text is a description of it, let us

II. ATTEND TO SOME OF ITS CIRCUMSTANCES, AND ITS RESULTS. For the exhibition of these, we shall confine ourselves to the text: not even attempting at present, to give a *general* description of that great day.

1. *The person to whom judgment is committed is the* "*Son of man.*" This is a name given to the Divine Saviour, on account of his human descent—and its use here seems to intimate one grand reason why He, rather than another person of the Deity, is to conduct the general judgment. It is for the purpose of more perfectly displaying his glory, by contrasting it with his humiliation: for thus it is said of him: "the Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, *because* he is the Son of man." (John v. 26, 27.) Therefore,

2. The manner of his coming to judgment will be *with sudden and awful display of glory.* "The Son of man, (says our text) shall come in his glory, and sit upon the throne *of his glory.*" What the nature and exact degree of that attendant glory will be, we shall never conceive until we witness it —nor are our faculties capable of it, unless

they could embrace infinity, or reduce spiritual existences to material. Undoubtedly most of the descriptions of revelation on this subject are to be considered as figurative : of course they must fall far short of an adequate exhibition. But even according to this measure, the appearance of the Son of man will be surpassingly glorious and awfully sublime. Take the visions of Daniel, or of John, for instance—or the prophecies of Paul, and you have representations in comparison with which I know of nothing equal in scripture. You will then see him appear *suddenly* " in flaming fire"—revealed in quick vengeance upon his enemies, as sheets of lightning shoot out from a riven thunder cloud—" attended with *all* the holy angels," even " thousands of thousands stand before him, and ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto him"—heralded by the " voice of an arch-angel and the trump of God."—An august and ancient personage makes his appearance, " clothed with a vesture down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle, sitting *upon a great white throne*, from whose presence *the heaven and earth flee away.*" This will be the sudden and the glorious appearance of your Judge, hear-

ers—and it will be thus glorious, for one reason, because he *is* the Son of man.

3. *To this judgment, all nations are to be assembled, and when assembled they shall be separated.* Figurative or not figurative, there is no escaping this conclusion from the passage, if our text refers, as we have proved, to a future judgment; and if it mean any thing as descriptive of that event, it must mean that the judgment shall be *universal;* and that all will not stand together, but be *separated* in that assembly. We choose to leave this representation, in all its simple plainness, upon your memories. Take then, the words of our text, as they stand: hear Christ himself saying, "that before him shall be gathed *all* nations, and he shall *separate them one from another,* as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." Take these words as truly referring to the manner of the future judgment, and say, on your consciences, if you can believe that all will stand alike, and in one relation before the Son of man? No, my dear brethren—and your consciences bear me witness while I say so—there will be a *division* between saints and sinners, at the day of doom.

4. We take notice *of the welcoming of the righteous into bliss, with the glory and the ground*

of that blessedness. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, (will the Judge say to the righteous) inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for *I* was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink." What blessed words of welcome are these, succeeding as they do, to the terrors of the Redeemer's majesty, and the raging thunders of a dissolving universe! what intimations of the ancient destination and perpetuity of this reward, in the saying, "prepared for *you* of my Father, before the foundation of the world;" and what a comfortable ground of this assurance, in representing *all* as given, because of our near relation to Christ! Thus I understand the latter part of the representation: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat:" And when it is inquired, "when saw we thee an hungered, and gave thee meat?" the Saviour answers: "in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me:" that is, those to whom ye did it *were* my children—ye also are my children, and ye have therefore done it *unto me.*

It relates to the union of Christ and believers—and, on this subject, the strong figures used in another part of scripture, do not

now appear too strong: for, in both, we hear the Saviour say, "I am the vine, ye are the branches"—ye are members of my body, and flesh, and bones—ye have manifested this union by your deeds of righteousness, and I now receive you on this ground, into your everlasting kingdom.

5. To the wicked, now standing on the left hand, the Judge will utter a very different language: "Depart, from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." A doom equally ancient in destination, and equally memorable, is thus denounced upon the wicked: it is a doom of signal relationship, being of the same nature with that denounced ages before, upon apostate angels—and the ground of it is the want of obedience to righteousness, manifesting a want of union to the Saviour.

It is worth a long and serious remembrance, brethren, that the wicked will be condemned at last, *for sins of omission.* "*I was naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.*" And it is reasonable it should be so. For the sin of omitting to obey Christ has the full principle of rebellion in it—and here it manifests especially, a total disconnexion with and enmity against him.

Finally, the results of this transaction, to ei-

ther of the parties, *will be determinate and altogether unchangeable.* "These, (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." It is of vast importance, hearers, that we rightly receive this part of the Saviour's description. Every thing of weight and awfulness in a future judgment, and every thing momentous to our own soul's interest in it, depend on this truth —whether its results will be final, or whether there will be any change after the day of judgment.

Let us carefully, and without any bias, then, consider the reasons for believing it final.

First. The plain and natural understanding of the passage is in favour of it. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." I question whether any child, or any candid person, who had not been in the habit of hearing systems defended, would think of understanding the passage in any other way. He would have read before of some who are "suffering the vengeance of *eternal* fire;" (Jude i. 7) of others "who shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" (2 Thess. i. 9) and he hears the Saviour now say, at the close of a formal

description of the day of judgment—"these (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." What would he naturally conclude? would he think of any other construction, than that it meant the *final* state of the wicked? But

Secondly. The connexion of the passage requires this interpretation. Just before, the Saviour has invited the righteous into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and denounced upon the wicked, in correspondent terms, the durability of the kingdom prepared for them. Thus far, no one ever thought of breaking in upon the perfect parallelism of the two cases. But now, adds the Saviour, "these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Now, since not only the same parallelism of representation as before, but the same *word*, "everlasting," is used in reference to the reward of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked—is it not reasonable to conclude that both these states are to be eternal? I know all this has been said a thousand times before; but the fact that it has been so often said, and never refuted, is not a very unfavourable evidence of its validity. But

Thirdly, a critical examination of the word itself requires it. We know well that the word *everlasting* is sometimes used to denote a temporal duration : as when we read of the *everlasting hills*—and when the Jewish church state is called everlasting. The propriety of the usage is obvious. It denotes, in these instances, that the objects to which it is applied should endure *to the end* of the state or dispensation in which they have their existence. The Jewish church should endure to *the end* of that dispensation : the solid mountains will endure to *the end of time.*

Now adapt this usage in the case, and what will *everlasting* mean, when applied to an era *beyond time ?* it will mean *to the end of eternity !* But we have seen it so used to day: *after* the day of judgment, it is said, " the wicked shall go away into *everlasting* punishment." That awful doom, therefore, shall last to *the end of eternity.* This argument is to me perfectly conclusive. The word everlasting, as here used, does mean a term altogether *endless.* It is the same word used to describe the eternity of God, " from everlasting to *everlasting*, thou art God"—it is the same word used to describe the previous eternity of the Son of God, " whose goings forth

are from of old, even from everlasting :" it is the same word used to describe the heaven of the righteous—" these shall go away into life everlasting ;" and if, now, in its natural connexion, and critical construction, it do not mean *endless* here, then language is incapable of expressing that idea.

Finally, this event s every where, and always, when spoken of in scripture, *represented as a concluding event.* The judgment is called *the* judgment ; (Heb. ix. 27 ;) and elsewhere, " *the last* day—the *great* and *terrible* day of the Lord." The trumpet, which awakes the dead, is called " the *last* trumpet." (1 Cor. xv. 52.) It is the subduing of *all things to himself*, by Christ : (verse 26 :) it is " a *finishing* of the mediatorial kingdom :" (verse 28 :) " It is the *second death :*" (Rev. xx. 14 :) and it is that appointment in which the unjust shall be unjust still : and the filthy remain filthy still. (Rev. xxii. 11.)

These, certainly, are strong representations—and now, I ask, is there any thing which appears in opposition ? Is there any thing said, in scripture, even intimating a change *after the day of judgment ?* If so, where is it ? In what chapter, and in what language is it intimated, that there shall be another dispensation after the day of judg-

ment? No where, brethren; not one verse whispers it: there is a deep and awful silence reigns here—and by that awful silence, sa well as the positive assertions on the other side, the word of God has shut up the finally impenitent to a fixed state. We have no disposition to exaggerate here—our feelings forbid it: If we mistake not, there is a deep and anxious concern for sinners, when we think on this subject, which would lead us sooner to weep for them than to aggravate their doom. Neither shall we at present attempt to speculate on the *nature* of future punishment. It is enough to know its certainty—and that it is unchangeable. What God will do to the wicked, in *kind*, we know not—and we do not desire to know; but we do know what he will *not* do with them: he will never make them holy: he will never receive them into heaven: he will never change their destiny: it must be, oh it *must* be, *eternal!*

Such, if we are not mistaken, is the scriptural doctrine of a future judgment. The passage under consideration is a formal description of that event; and from this we learn its circumstances: it will be *the sudden and glorious appearing of the Son of man: the whole world will be assembled before him, and divided into classes:* they will be judged,

on the ground of *their obedience*, or *non-obedience*—thereby intimating a union, or want of union to the Redeemer: and the important results will be, *a state of exalted glory to the righteous*, with *the banishment and unchangeable misery of the wicked.*

Already, I should hope, we have a magnitude and interest given to this subject, sufficient to commend it to our most serious and lasting attention. But we feel disposed to urge it still further, by carrying out some of the principles in a more particular application.

1. What an affecting exhibition does one part of this subject afford us, *of the humiliation of Christ!* "I was an hungered, (says he to the wicked) and ye gave me no meat: thirsty, and ye gave no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed not: sick and in prison, and ye visited me not." This, though spoken with principal reference to Christ's poor children, was, in almost all points, true of himself. On earth the Saviour was a spectacle of extreme poverty; and had it been our lot to have had a personal acquaintance with him, we should have seen him literally hungry—friendless—without comfortable clothing, and abandoned, apparently, of God

and man. What a spectacle, had we known especially, who it was that was thus humbled, and for what cause! It was the Lord of life and glory, that was thus wretched: it was for *our* sakes, brethren, that "he became poor."

2. But observe, secondly, *what a glorious contrast in his character, the day of which we have been speaking, will exhibit.* "The Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory." It will be the Son of man still; but he will then be seen in exaltation. From a hungry and thirsty out-cast, he will reign in all the splendour of a God: from being alone and despised—nations and innumerable hosts of angels will stand before him: from a swaddled babe, and a criminal that was condemned, and mocked, and spit upon—he will be seen robed in omnipotence, and sitting as the Judge of quick and dead. Yes, it is the same Being, sinner, and you will be there to witness the amazing change.

3. Our subject presents, in a strong light, *the criminal nature of the sins of omission.* Many are ready to imagine that these sins are of no very serious consequence—and if through any favourable circumstances, they have been kept from gross transgression, it is seldom that their consciences are troubled

from omitting the duties of religion. Let it be considered, however, that the scriptures give another view of this subject. To omit what God has required is of the same nature as to transgress what is forbidden. It proceeds from the same cause—has as strong a principle of rebellion in it—and as it manifests the same want of union to Christ—the original cause of all obedience —will be made the ground of decision at the day of judgment. "I was an hungered, and ye gave no meat." But

4. We have here *an encouraging and most interesting view of the facts of Christian charity.* Whom do you minister unto, christian, when you sincerely perform an act of benevolence? "In as much (says the Saviour) as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Without exaggeration, you may consider yourselves as ministering to Christ himself—and to Christ the humbled Saviour, needing and asking for this assistance. Higher motives to christian charity cannot be presented. Oh, consider it when you feed the poor, visit the sick, or give to the wretched heathen: place before your mind a suffering Christ—and see if warmer blood does not thrill

through the hand that is stretched out to relieve him. And

Finally : we *are enabled thus to determine, for which side of the judgment seat of Christ we are preparing.* That day being such as we have seen it, a greater question was never agitated, certainly, than this—*where we shall be found in the trial?* Let this text assist us in deciding. Are we feeding the poor, clothing the naked, and relieving the distressed ? Are we especially doing this for religious distresses ? and are we doing it from love to Christ, and because of our own living union with him ? Then are we preparing for his right hand : then shall we hear him welcome us to all the joys of his Father's house, at the great day of judgment. Amen.

LECTURE XIV.

THE VALUE OF REDEMPTION.

PSALM xlix. 8.

The redemption of their soul is precious.

THERE is a degree of obscurity in this passage, which we shall attempt to remove before speaking directly of what is believed to be its leading sentiment. From the context, it would at first appear that the Psalmist is speaking of the value of natural life to man. "None (says he) can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him"—"that he should still live forever, and not see corruption." The text intervenes these sentences, and as the scriptures use the same original word for *soul* and *life*, it might be supposed that the rendering should have been *life* in all these instances,

and then the sentiment of our text would simply be, that the redemption of life from death is precious ; being, by mere natural causes, altogether impossible. This I apprehend, however, is not the only or principal meaning of the text.

There is, indeed, an analogy, in many respects, between the principal of natural life in man, and that immortal thinking part called the soul: so much so, that the ancients, as we have seen, used the same word to express both ; and it may reasonably be doubted whether they had clear apprehensions of the proper distinctions between them. Now this being the case, it was natural for David, and common to the dispensation under which he lived, to open this subject, as he avows, "in a parable," and to speak of the great subject of the soul's redemption in connexion with a represenation concerning natural life. I believe, then, that the passage has reference to both these subjects. No man by his riches can save life—much less can he give a ransom for the soul. *Its* redemption is very precious : "it costs more to redeem the soul," is the rendering in some versions : and we shall feel justified in considering the passage in this higher reference—THE VALUE OF REDEMPTION.

Let us attempt, then, to estimate the worth

and importance of redemption, and this from several considerations.

I. And *first*, THE SUBJECT OF REDEMPTION. This is the soul—not the destinies of matter—not of animals or of mere intelligence, are we now to speak, but of the immortal spirit; and with all its powers and affections, to enter into the value of its redemption, we must conceive something of the worth of the spirit itself. The worth of the soul appears, then,

1. *From the history of our creation.* There is obviously a beautiful gradation in all the works of God; whereby those parts that are less excellent in nature are made dependent on others above them; and this gradation seems to have obtained in the order of time in which the different existences were created. The lowest order of created things seems to be unorganized matter. God, therefore, first created this. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth; and the earth was without form and void." (Gen. i. 1, 2.) He next created elementary *light*: next *vegetation*: next light was organized into the *luminaries*: *brute animals* obtained the next order in creation—and, last of all, he created *man*. Man was thus signalized as the best of God's works on

earth; and to graduate the worth of his properties still farther, his soul was created subsequently to the body, and by a different process. Of the dust was man's body created; but God "*breathed* into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Gen. ii. 7.) The soul of man, then, was the last direct act of creating power, that God ever exercised on earth.

This order in creation bespeaks something of marked and preeminent value in the human soul: nor was this preeminence improperly assigned to it. Look,

2. *At the nature and capacities of the soul.* It is by the soul, or his powers of thinking and invention, that man is able to rule the brute creation; for the brute creation are possessed, in many instances, of physical powers, far superior to his own. It is by his powers of invention, that effects in physicks are produced, which all the immeasurable force of the elements could never produce if left to their own direction. By mechanical invention these powers are brought to operate to specifick purposes, and vast and otherwise immoveable bodies are handled at pleasure. The giant power of steam lifts the massy mountain from its bed—and the ship is directed unhurt, through all the fury of tempests—when, without the governing

direction of man, she must be overwhelmed or crushed as in an instant.

But what shall we say further, in this connexion, of man's abstruser powers ! what depth of reasoning and judgment does he possess ! what niceness of taste—what a reach of imagination ! and who can look, without admiration, on what these have effected, even in the ruder states of society and among unchristianized heathen ! Even there the soul of man shone out. In moral and metaphysical science the heathen made respectable attainments : In the arts and works of imagination they surpassed, perhaps, all modern excellence. Who can read their subtle disquisitions—examine their architecture and statuary—drink in the living soul of their poetry, or thrill with the moral sentiment of their speaking canvass, and not do homage to the elevation of human intellect !

But these are among the lower capacities of the immaterial man. It must be remembered, now, that he is a moral being ; and it is by his moral capacities, principally, that his worth is to be estimated.

By these, man takes hold, in this world, of all his substantial enjoyment : by these alone, he has any true conceptions of God,

and thus finds them constituting the link by which heaven and earth are united : by these he learns to spurn low and defiling pursuits : by these he is prompted to long for immortality—and by these he is capacitated for such a state in their continual expansion through exercise and enjoyment.

Let us look at this last of man's moral faculties alone, and see if it does not stamp unspeakable worth on the possessor. Man's faculties of moral enjoyment are evidently progressive here, and we may safely infer, that they ever will be. What a thought ! through everlasting ages he will be ascending ! The time will come when he will have left the present attainments of cherubim and seraphim behind him—and still stretching onward towards the infinite God, it will yet be—since there is an eternity for the achievement—it will yet be, that the now feeblest saint on earth, will know more and enjoy more of God than all of these properties we have yet conceived, as belonging to God himself.

Do not these powers and capacities of the soul assign it an exalted grade of excellence ? They do not indeed necessarily stand connected with holiness : they are faculties : and if, in what these faculties have

effected short of grace, we seem to see an emanation of eternal intelligence—angels in ruin—what impressions shall we take of their worth, when rekindled with moral renovation! Ah, it is then that the soul blazes with original lustre: it is when we see its actings towards God and immortality, that we exclaim with the poet:

> "The soul of man was made to walk the skies."

And with another—that

> "Tired of earth and this diurnal sphere,
> "She springs aloft, pursues the flying storm;
> "Or yok'd with lightnings and the northern blast,
> "Sweeps the long tract of day."

3. It is on the ground of this superiority of rational man, as it appears to me, *that all other beings, at least in our world, are subservient to him.* "Thou hast put (says the Psalmist) all things under his feet." (Ps. viii. 6.) We know this to be fact. Matter, we have seen, to be altogether inferior to the soul: animal life is a distinct property, altogether dependent on it; the brute and physical creation, with all their strength and unwieldliness, are controlled by the rational powers of man. This speaks much for the estimation in which man is held by that Being, who has put all things

under him ; but as we shall have occasion to speak of this subject again, we pass it at present for another consideration.

4. *Man's soul is immortal.* Not independently or necessarily immortal, for *this* immortality belongs only to God. (See 1 Timothy i. 17.) Nor yet, that souls existed *from* eternity, since there can be but one such Being, who is the origin of all others ; but only that the soul shall endure forever, having once commenced existence, and that by the sustaining power of God, who has given testimony, both in his word and in the faculties of the soul itself, that he intends it such a duration.

The proofs most relied on from the nature of the soul, are its *immateriality* and *activity :* its *growing capacities*, and its strong *desire* for immortality. These, taken in connexion with the benevolence of God, and the wisdom which seems to have made nothing without an adequate object, are certainly strong presumptive arguments for the soul's immortality. But in as much as they do not leave us perfectly assured on this important point, the scriptures add their testimony, and this is explicit. It is sufficient, for the present, to refer to two or three passages, in or-

der to show that neither the souls of the righteous or the wicked, will ever cease to be. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John xi. 26.) "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." (Math. xxv. 46.) "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 48.)

The soul of every rational being, then, is immortal. And now, what inestimable value does this property alone import? If that eternity is to be made wretched by a voluntary disobedience, duty is pressed by all this incalculable amount of suffering. If happy, and if happiness be desirable, then the longer that happiness, the higher the blessing which is proffered. But the soul *is* immortal: while matter and motion cease, it endures: while all else wastes and disappears, this progresses by rising: and when the sun shall be uncentered, and the wide universe in ashes, high and calm above the ruin, the heaven-born soul shall stretch its never ending, never tiring flight towards God.

Such is the soul: its history, its capacities, its order in creation, and its destination, are before us; and from these we may infer its value. It is a property for which the whole world would be too cheap a barter:

angels delight to claim relationship to the soul; and the vast building of the universe is not splendid or durable enough to be its habitation. He who possesses a soul, be it the soul of a Hindoo or Hottentot, may look up on the zodiac and say—"ye glittering constellations, I cannot settle in so low a region."

Such is the soul; but we have not yet given the principal estimate of its worth. Suppose, then, my brethren, that such a soul were in danger: some powerful enemy has plotted its ruin: some fatal poison has been fixed in its texture, or some dreadful forfeiture incurred, which threatens its eternal perdition. What exertions may we suppose, could, with propriety, be made in its behalf? what sacrifices would be incurred, and ransoms offered to effect its deliverance? But such, my brethren, has been the actual occurrence. This soul—this priceless soul, was in jeopardy—and it has been *redeemed*:—redeemed, "not with silver and gold," but with the precious blood of the Son of God.

Having, therefore, looked at the worth of the soul, as one point in this great subject, let us now,

II. Take a more general view OF REDEMPTION ITSELF. "The redemption of the soul is precious." The case thus presents

itself. Millions of these souls, upon the least of which no adequate value can be set by us—are regarded as in a fallen, condemned, and perishing state before God. The question may be considered as agitated, respecting their possible deliverance. *Who shall effect it?* It is clearly seen, that an infinite being is required for this work, and how could it be conceived by any thing less than God's wisdom, that an infinite being should be willing, or could—were there a will for it—so attach himself to the interests and the nature of fallen man, as to occupy his place in law and justice, and effect his redemption? But happily for us, infinite wisdom and infinite benevolence *were* present to solve this mighty difficulty. The Son of God rises from his throne to espouse the wretched cause of man: he seals, at that moment, a solemn engagement to become a surety for sinners: he covenants to do all that law and justice require to be done: he remains mindful of his word through all the intervening ages of eternity: he commences, in some measure, this mediatorial service, so soon as man is created—and in the fulness of the time appointed, enters into a state of perfect humanity for executing this high engagement, by obedience, and suffering, and death.

We read that Christ "was seen of angels." These exalted beings watched all the steps of his wonderous work—and they saw him at *the temple*, where he began to vindicate his heavenly wisdom—at *Nazareth*, where he set a perfect example of filial obedience—at *Jordan*, submitting to all the requirements of the Jewish ritual—in *the synagogue*, speaking as never man spake—and at *the tomb of Lazarus*, manifesting himself "the resurrection and the life:"—in *Gethsemane* they saw him too, sweating "great drops of blood," under the burden of the world's atonement—on the cross, where he cried, "it is finished," and tore the hand writing which he had signed in our behalf, to fragments, and in his triumphant ascent from the tomb of Joseph, when he "led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The angels saw all this, and they cried as they attended him back to his throne, we see it! we see it! "there is redemption thro' his blood."

Thus was laid the meritorious foundation for the soul's redemption. Let us now contemplate the greatness of this work, from several additional considerations. And

1. *It makes great discoveries of the perfections of God.* Through what he has revealed of himself in the works of redemption, we have learned more of the wisdom and benevo-

lence of God, than we could ever have conceived without this exhibition ; as well as to see more clearly, the rigid character of justice and the dreadful nature of sin.

But particularly have we seen, in this work of redemption, new occasions to admire the mysterious relations of the Trinity, and new beauties in the adorable Son of God. This then, is,

2. A second consideration to give value to redemption--*the high and glorious character of its immediate author.* We shall say but little at present, on a subject which we have repeatedly discussed ; but we may remind you, brethren, that this is the method by which the apostle gives value to the subject of redemption. He tells us that its immediate author is the *Son of God*, and he labours through the whole first chapter of Hebrews, to give exaltation to his character. You are there told, in consequence, that he is " the heir of all things"--that he is " better than the angels"--that he " made the worlds"--that he is an object of " worship"--that his " throne" of dominion is " righteous and forever"--and that he is " God," and *immutable*, while the heavens are frail and perishing !

These attributes, then, and many more we might now assign to the author of re-

demption, and then, inferring the relation of this authorship upon the work itself, we might exclaim with Paul, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation." (Ch. ii. 3.)

3. Redemption may be contemplated in *its relation to the present happiness of man, and the preservation of the world.* The only substantial happiness, as individuals, is that which flows from religion; nor is it a small, any more than a visionary happiness, for a man to feel that he is saved from hell and a candidate for heaven—to have a conscious pardon of sin already, and to hold intercourse with the highest and best of Beings, as a reconciled Father. But we pass from this at present. What is it but religion, my friends, that comforts a man in the day of sorrow? Come to the poor, afflicted, sick or bereaved child of woe, with any other cup of consolation, and see if he will not dash it away from his lips: He will tell you as one of the friends of the Heathen Philosopher* told him, when he had laboured to comfort the afflicted man under a heavy bereavement: "I want something more—I want something *different.*" Religion alone *can* sustain the afflicted: By all the rational, every other solace is put aside as useless.

*Pliny.

And it is only religion which sustains the peace and order of society : by this alone, and only in that degree, that it is fostered and prevails, can laws be administered—government supported—crimes suppressed, or human intercourse be regulated. Learning, manners, the social virtues and the charities of life have no other security : nay, the very material world, and all worlds, are probably suspended on this condition.

It is plainly taught in scripture, that for the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, "all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." They are all subservient to this great end ; and hold their existence only by their relation to it. And should we suppose that no other worlds but this were inhabited by rational beings, it would not be too much to conclude that the vast globes around us, wait on this, because here are rational souls, and because here the work of redemption was wrought.

Lastly ; The greatness of this work of redemption may be seen, *in that of care and attention which is given to it among the works of providence.* Great is the amount of care and labour that saves a single soul. After Christ has died, the work is not done. The subject,

from being opposed, is to be made willing to accept him : faith must lay her hand on the head of the victim : the waters of repentance must flow from a broken heart : sanctification is to be carried on against a thousand obstacles—and death conquered—and heaven made sure forever, before redemption, in any practical sense, can be considered as completed. But millions of souls have thus been redeemed already—and we ought not to wonder at the amount of labour, so to speak, which has been bestowed on this object.

For this God revealed himself to man in paradise : for this he instituted sacrifices and sabbaths : for this he separated a nation to himself, and gave them laws to govern, and types and ceremonies to instruct them in the ways of righteousness : for this end miracles were wrought, and a Bible given—and prophets and martyrs raised up : towards a development of the work of redemption all the movements and changes of governments were directed : in this cause two mighty worlds have been at war for ages—and the advances of heaven or hell have alternately blessed the earth, or covered it with wretchedness.

The movements towards redemption have been universally felt—and even now traces of its history are found where their import is forgotten. No tribe of men has yet been discovered, where some ideas did not exist, which were evidently borrowed from revelation; and symbols of the fall of man—the deluge—of a Trinity, and an incarnation, have been detected in their songs and traditions, or seen glaring on the grim countenances of their idols.

These works of providence record a great event. They present all worlds and all events in the attitude of pointing to one centre; and, like the star of Bethlehem, while they settle over one place, they seem to acknowledge that the object which lies there is worthy of all their worship.

But the work of redemption is not yet consummated. Would we enter into the estimation of its highest value, we must follow its triumphs down the track of time, to the the millenium, and to the resurrection of the just. Oh for Isaiah's spirit, or the elevated height where Moses stood to contemplate this glorious consummation! Oh, to take one clear and believing glance across the vale of wintry years, and to see redemption's recreating triumph! Great God! what a vis-

ion of blessedness do I see ! The whole earth is quiet and at rest : light has dissipated every cloud of prejudice and passion, and there is no more war : religion, pure and undefiled, has melted the kindred nations and sectaries together—and the church is one : the poor pagans are visited—and the cry of blood, and blasphemy, and agony, has ceased through all their millions : the curse is lifted from the earth : and the wilderness and the rock blossom—the memphitic swamp is a garden—and Zaharah bubbles with pools of water ! "Weary, worn out tempests" die away : the prince of the power of the air is dethroned : sinners, from earth's remotest ends, come bending to Christ : Judah's scattered sons are remembered in mercy : the prodigal children of Islam return to their father's house : the earth's countless tribes are congregating under a heaven of be nding benificence, to bless the common Creator !

I see all this : I see it for a thousand years : But I follow the world to its last agonies : I trace the children of redemption through the gulf of death and the shock of a ruined world. Lo ! I see them rising from its ruins, triumphant over the grave, and shining through the smoky columns of the last day ! I

behold ten thousand and ten thousand glorious bodies presented to their Lord—entering heaven—commencing their everlasting march of glory: and then, and not till then, I hear the shout go up—the shout that never smote heaven's canopy before—*Redemption is completed!*

A few remarks of direct application will close what we have further to say on this subject. And

1. *Let us learn to respect ourselves.* The soul is incalculably the better part of man; and estimated by this standard, we cannot respect ourselves too highly. Oh, is it not too much, hearers, that a being of etherial origin and nature—to whom all worlds do reverence—and for whom Christ died—should debase and content itself upon low pursuits—upon the fodder of sense, and the filth of debauch! Do justice to your natures, brethren: listen to the remonstrances of the soul: respect yourselves, and turn away from vice and gross indulgence, as infinitely beneath you.

2. Is the soul thus exalted? is redemption thus valuable? *then let us show some corresponding care for its welfare.* My hearers, are we doing this? are we giving that attention to this great subject which its impor-

tance demands? are there not some who give less attention to the soul's redemption than is given to almost every other subject? I fear there are—I am distressed with the apprehension, that this neglect will continue, and they will loose their souls forever! Loose their *souls!* But oh, what a loss will this be! what act of treason, of oppression, of murder or cruelty, could equal it? How will a man answer it to God? what will he say when that Being demands of him an account of his soul? 'I committed it to thee, (it would be said,) for thy safe keeping: you knew something of its origin and nature: you heard what I had done for it: *its redemption was precious*, and everlasting blessedness was reserved as its portion, had you but been found faithful. And have you lost it after all, sinner? is it gone, gone beyond the reach of recovery, to groan and blaspheme with devils forever?' Oh, what criminality can match this! what weight or duration of punishment shall pay the penalty of neglecting the soul's redemption!

You must awake to this great subject, sinners: you must believe that your souls are in danger—and you must conceive of your guilt in neglecting them, or they will never be saved

And so must we awake, christians, or wear the brand of alarming inconsistency. We cannot have looked at the value of redemption without feeling that we do nothing, almost nothing, correspondent to this great subject. Permit me to say, it is the object of the present remarks, to elevate our minds, if possible, to a higher standard of duty: and permit me to tell those especially for whom these lectures have been prepared, that their hope and highest reward will be lost, if they do not help you to grow in grace and the knowledge of the high mysteries of redemption.

What, then, are our attainments, and what are we doing that corresponds with the dignity of this high subject? Do we venerate our souls as we ought? do we love to follow after divine knowledge? do we look high enough for the seat of our eternal dwelling? do we cultivate, as we might, our friendship with angels? do we pant after the full image of God? do we prize the cause of religion above every other cause? and do we labour, and pray, and make sacrifices, to carry its destined influence over the whole world?

Oh for more of the spirit of Martyn and Brainerd, in this great cause! Oh for more

communion with Paul and with Jesus Christ, in the continual and vehement desire for universal redemption!

My brethren, the time is short that we can labour in this great work—and yet much remains to be done—much in the world—much in the church—much in our own souls. I cannot be willing, for myself, to leave all this work to others; and one more effort, in which I hoped to do good, is now finished and before you. Amen.

ADDITIONAL SERMONS.

CHRIST THE CONQUEROR OF DEATH, AND THE FRIEND IN JUDGMENT.

TO THE PATRONS OF THIS WORK.

Unwilling as the author is to trouble the reader with his private history, he deems it proper to state the circumstances in which the following additional discourses were finished. When the impression had proceeded thus far, the printer, who was also publisher, gave notice that additional matter was wanting; not on the ground of an actual deficiency in the size of the work, (the whole number of lectures originally proposed, having been only twelve) but from a miscalculation as to the probable number of pages. He was unwilling to disappoint his subscribers, even by a nominal deficiency.

But this notice reached the author at a time of unusual family affliction. His companion was in the last stages of a consumption, and himself already confined for several weeks with an inflammation of the eyes. Thus situated, and within a few days after the severest of all earthly bereavements, by the help of an amenuensis, he has undertaken to revise and prepare the discourses in question. He felt that some

thing of more than ordinary application would be requisite suitably to finish the preceding lectures: that allowances would be made for circumstances so disadvantageous—and that some views taken at such an hour, on a plain but important subject, might be worth preserving.

SERMON I.

HEBREWS ix. 27.

It is appointed unto all men once to die; but after this the judgment.

The doom pronounced upon man for his first act of disobedience, included all kinds of death. The sentence may be considered as running thus: Thou shalt die in body; thou shalt die as to all holiness in character; and thou shalt die by a just and eternal condemnation.

Now, since the apostle is here making a comparison of the "once offering of Christ," and his coming to glorify his saints, with the death and judgment procured by the sin of man, it is very possible that death, in its widest sense, is intended in our text. Natural death, however, and the judgment which follows, are not only the direct consequences of this early denunciation, but

do, in some sense, comprise the whole of its meaning, as now explained. We may, therefore, without unfaithfulness to the text, confine ourselves, at present, to the two points of declaration here contained.

I. *That all men do certainly die :* and

II. *That after this they pass to judgment.*

I. The certainty of death. We do not, indeed, need convincing of this. As a matter of fact, it is admitted at once; but is not this one among the many cases where we have reason to think that men assent to a proposition, without truly believing it? Have living men any of that persuasive trust in regard to this truth, which is essential in all cases to real faith? It is believed not; and we think there is the more need of frequently and forcibly urging this truth, from the consideration that men do not love to think of death, and for the most part, do not, unless it is obtruded upon them.

Let us attempt to aid our weak convictions on this subject, therefore—not by formal demonstrations of the certainty of death, but by solemn representation, bringing it as near as possible.

Look around you, then, and behold the *symptoms and analogies of death.* Every object, with which we have hitherto become

acquainted, has more or less of these appearances attached to it. Every thing in the vegetable world dies yearly : the grass blossoms, and is cut down by the mower's scythe : our crops share the same destiny : and even the stately trees of the forest cast their annual verdure, and their lofty trunks are marred by violence, or wasting away with some gradual consumption. You behold the mineral kingdom exhibiting the same appearance : ores and mines are gradually yielding to the consumptions of man : animals are subject to disease, and destroy one another : mountains are running down into the vallies : the rivers of antiquity are already dried up ; and the very planetary system, by a few centuries of observation, is found to be drawing nearer together, and indicates a time when the grand machine must be wound up.

The works of art are still more unable to resist the progress of decay. A man may write a splendid history of a splendid event, but millions of such volumes are already extinct and forgotten ; he may build a tomb as large as the pyramids over his ashes—but 'tombs are mortal :' the all destroying hand of time scatters the sculptured marble on the wind.

From all these analogies, then, we might expect that man was mortal, had no decree announced it: he might live a little longer, perhaps, and being among the higher order of God's works, it would perhaps be expected that he should; but die he must. Every analogy, every symptom in other works, would tell him that sooner or later he must go down, with the rest of created objects, to the dust! Behold,

2. *The varied instrumentality of death—the means which surround us for effecting this event.* It takes but little to destroy human life; and yet the world is full of instruments for effecting this destruction. The soul and body are united by a thread, which the smallest incident might sever; and yet there seem to stand around us giants, with battle axes, as if impatient of a possibility that we should escape. Millions of poisonous insects fly in the air, and crawl in the valley: suffocating vapours exhale from woods, and rivers, and swamps: the slightest variation in the proportions of the gasses of which our atmosphere is composed, would instantly destroy us: our bodies are exposed to about eleven hundred specifick diseases —any one of which might be fatal: accidents by drowning—by fire—by the stroke of ani-

mals—the falling of timber—and innumerable other casualties, continually beset us. Lightnings shoot their fiery arrows from the clouds—earthquakes rock our habitations into dust—and war, and treason, hurl men in millions against the bosoms of their fellow men, to effect this emulous work of destruction. Surrounded with such an instrumentality, how can we escape? In sight of innumerable foes of life, in every stage and attitude of our existence, who does not know that he must die? These seem to me, to place us in an open field of continual exposure: they strip our bosoms bare of defence, and stand around us, brandishing their naked weapons at the mark.

But observe again, *that the work of death is actually going on:* it is not from analogy—not from exposure, that we are left to *infer* our *mortality*—we see the actual process. Oh yes, and from the day in which the earth drank the blood of the first martyr, slain by a brother's hand, there has not been a moment's interval! From long before the days of the flood, or so soon as the earth had become as populous as it now is, there has been going into the eternal world, some trembling newly dismissed spirit, at the full rate of one for every second of time. The

work goes on ; and we see them now falling on our right hand and on our left, by all the nameless modes of destruction to which we have alluded. The work goes on : and I see the flitted spirits gathering in dusky bands on the further shores of Jordan, more numerous than the driven leaves of autumn or the populous armies of birds and insects, travelling with the season, to more propitious climes. The work goes on : and I see age sinking in its decrepitude ; manhood in its strength ; youth in its bloom ; and infancy in its loveliness—withered, crushed, and torn away from the bleeding heart-strings of the living. The work goes on ; and over all this work of mighty ruin, I see *death* the grim monarch, presiding as a director. He sits in retired and awful silence, giving an account of none of his doings—his feet are on a prostrate mortal—his sceptre is a shroud—his ten thousand ministers, even famine, pestilence and vice, stand waiting around, and as he turns his withering eye over the fair fields of creation, he strews them with the carcases of all the living!

The work is going on : and now while I speak, a gasping mortal has closed his breath ; and now another soul has fled ; and now another, and another, and another, gone

beyond a returnless gulf; made his last voyage, and entered eternity with all the tremendous responsibilities of a final character upon his head! And is not this enough to make us realize the truth of our text? Do we not see all men die, and is not such a spectacle most solemnly affecting?

Nor is this all: In taking such a view of death, it would be well to reflect on *the nature and consequences of death.* It is not a trifling event. Men may affect to despise death, while at an imagined distance, and some have rushed madly into it, in the heats of ambition or private revenge; but it is a great thing to die, if you consider only the present aspects of death. What, is it a trifling evil for soul and body to be separated? Ask the dying duelist or the wounded warrior. They laughed or blasphemed, while rushing into danger: but oh, the scene is now changed; and when the heart's blood is flowing, and when the death shot has been probed and pronounced to be mortal, they groan as deeply, and look as anxiously as any others. Night gathers as dark a solitude on their sweating foreheads; they struggle deep and awfully, until their heart strings break, and their trembling, uncalled spirit flies, with all its bloody stains to judgment! No; death

is not a trifling evil, even in those aspects which it has already been exhibited. How it tears up old friendships and dissolves the tender ties of social relation! How it breaks down every high-built scheme of earthly good: How it sickens the heart of the widow, the parent, the orphan and the brother; and oh, how it mars the pampered frame of man, laying it low and nerveless in the dust, and reducing all that is excellent in God's handy work on earth to rottenness and deformity, too vile to be contemplated. Oh, no; I do not wonder that death is the king of terrors, in itself considered: I do not wonder if even the saint sometimes looks back from under the dim curtain that is shutting him from the world, "with longing, lingering looks behind."

But take one view more: It must increase our sensible apprehensions of death, if we can consider ourselves *as continually admonished of it.* So it is of all subjects, which are apt to be forgotten by us, that we feel them anew when spoken of; and if the subjects are important, we should desire to be often reminded of them, for this reason. Some have acted on this principle in relation to the great events of death. Philip, king of Macedon, placed a boy at the door of his

bed-chamber, who awoke him each morning with this call: "Remember, O Philip, thou must die." Others, like Hervey and Young, have taken sublime lessons on mortality, by walking in grave yards; and it is known well, what force and solemnity those admonitions have, which though, for the most part imaginary, are supposed to come from spirits and another world.

Now, God is actually addressing us on this principle. All the analogies of death, which we see in creation; all the instruments of it which are brandished around us, and all that we see of the work as it is actually going on, are so many loud voices, solemnly addressing us, and telling us we must die.—Nay; a louder voice than this is sounding: God's word repeats it with echo after echo: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

Nay, "it is appointed unto all men once to die." The fact and the circumstances of it, are all ordered. "His days are determined; the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." And is there not something most impressive in this, my brethren?

God appoints the day of our death, and the very instrument that shall effect it. He presides over the destinies of millions, all receiving, moment after moment, the shafts which he directs to effect their overthrow. He announces this state of danger to his creatures, and makes use of his word and providence, to convey the warning. Our dying friends and families tell us the awful lesson, when they can speak no longer. We read it in every sable garment that moves along the street—we see it in every trickling tear: we hear it in the suppressed and bursting sigh: it moans through every solitary walk at the hour of night; and as if an angel preached, I hear it now; I hear it to-day; *remember you are mortal*—"*it is appointed unto all men once to die!*"

II. And thus far of death: Let us now attend to something which is here connected with death, and of a still more solemn character; "*but after this the judgment.*" *There certainly will be such an event.* "God will bring every work into judgment, (says the wise man,) with every secret thought, whether it be good or evil." "*We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ,*" says Paul; "therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the

hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." And since this decision on human character will be the same at death as it will in the day of general judgment, the whole is frequently spoken of as *one* judgment in scripture : it is *the* judgment, and it is *eternal judgment.*

There will not be a succession of judgments : there will be no progressive improvements and correspondent approbations of the characters of men, after death : there will be one judgment, and that, as to its decisions, will be final. But

2. *The time of this event : It will be subsequent to death.* "It is appointed unto all men once to die, and *after this* the judgment."

This declaration is the same in doctrine, as that which says, that at the *end* of the world, Christ shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things which offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; "*then* shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"—of another, which says : "for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto

the resurrection of damnation"—and of still another, in which, after the *last trumpet* and the *resurrection of the dead*, the wicked are represented as being *cast into hell* and the righteous *caught up to be ever with the Lord.* These are all representations which refer to something after death, and forever forbid the supposition that any thing like a definitive judgment is now going on. Solemnly are we assured then of such an event: a judgment after death—a judgment which is one, and decisive.

Let us look then at the awful transaction. Not now in its circumstances of a sublimity and grandeur—not to falling stars, to opening graves, and a burning world; but that for which, could we do it justice, we should feel more deeply interested in this great transaction.

The prominent idea of judgment, is an examination and decision upon character. Let us look at this: *after death we must be tried before God.* There is something solemnly interesting in the spectacle of a capital trial, as it is often witnessed in our courts of justice. The formal order of the proceeding—the judge on the bench—the jury in their boxes—the witnesses—the advocates—the anxious prisoner, and the crowding specta-

tors, each with studious exactness, displaying the feelings and the functions of their respective conditions: the important consequence of facts developed, and above all, the vast stake at issue, as respects the destinies of the individual, all combine to give a trembling interest and solemnity to this transaction.

Similar to this then, but infinitely more important, will the event be, when we shall stand before God in judgment: we shall see a judge on the throne, who is all glorious in dignity, and who cannot be deceived in one feature of our character. The judgment hall will be the vast region of empty air: we shall see angels as spectators—the devils for our wicked and malignant accusers—and no advocate or intercessor to espouse our cause, unless we had previously secured one in the great Redemer of sinners. What shall we then plead? shall we say not guilty! shall we say, in the name of God, *not guilty!* Ah! here is the most overwhelming peculiarity in the trial: we ARE GUILTY, and the judge knows it. The evidence too is fully before him: his books contain a full record of our character: men and angels are ready to testify that it is just as they have stated; and when these facts

have been developed, for the sake of glorifying God, and shutting every mouth in silent confession, the sentence will go forth, which fixes our fate forever! *Guilty*, says the awful Judge upon the throne! *Guilty*, repeat the holy angels in concert! *Guilty*, resounds from the consenting multitude of countless spectators! and *guilty*, shout the fiends in triumph! *guilty*, *guilty*, justly tried and justly condemned to destruction!

I will pursue this allegory no further: the truth is certain, my friends, and needs no borrowed ornament. We shall all be tried after death, before the judgment seat of Christ. All truth will then come out, and all our characters will appear as they are. Oh what disappointments will then be felt! Oh what discoveries will surprise us! Confident nominal christians will be seen falling short of heaven! characters that were considered pious, and eminently so, by others, will be found to have been deceivers; and dark and intriguing contemners of all righteousness, will be dragged into discovery, with a blackness which was not even imagined or conceived to be possible. We do not know, my friends, we do not yet know the depths of wickedness in the human character; but we shall then know; and if through grace

we should escape ourselves, what will be our astonishment at the developments of this trial! We shall then see drunkenness, debauchery, lying, profanity, and injustice, standing forth with inconceivable deformity; but I verily believe these will not be among the worst of sins, which will be exposed. We may see secret malice—scornful envy—mocking irreligion—slander and persecution, marked with darker shades; and unbelief, and opposition to God, by reason of their being against such a character, will be written in stains still deeper, and hear the thunder of a louder condemnation. Such a trial is certainly to be instituted; and when we think what abundant materials for it are contained in our world, it is enough to make us all tremble.

Do we not, then, permit me to ask, as the *first inference* from this representation—*do we not all need an advocate* to conduct our cause in this trial? It is not our principal business, at present, to speak of such an advocate—something too extensive for a mere inference is said of him in the verses following our text; and we shall hereafter give a particular attention to this part of our subject. But you will never see the glories of that Being until you see something else first; and it seems to be the

object of this text to show our need of him.—Oh, can you not see that necessity in the thought of going to judgment! Conceive of yourself, even now, as suspended in the empty judgment hall of unmeasured space, to be tried for eternity! your trial has been heard—your perfect character is discovered—and amidst ten thousand times ten thousand, you have heard the cry of guilty, guilty! and felt yourself sinking, through burning worlds to hell! Do you not need an advocate? *you* cannot say a word; but what would you give for a friend now, to say it for you? Oh for an advocate! oh for an advocate now! and should you see one at that moment, stepping forth, robed with omnipotence, and mighty to save; should you hear his voice, crying, "hold, till I plead for that sinner! wait, and I will blanch his cause whiter than snow or wool." O, would it not be as the voice of life to your soul—breaking through the shadows of death?

There *is* such an advocate, hearers, but he will not appear as your friend, unless you engage him during life.

Permit me to ask one more question then, and after that, if possible, I will bring this subject, for the present, to a close.

What are you doing, and what are we all doing to prepare for this day of trial? It is truly affecting to see the manner in which most men treat the great concern of death and judgment; and I fear I may not be able to speak of this practical bearing of our subject with becoming moderation. We know we must all die; and after death there is to be a trial of our characters for eternity. We hear God continually announcing the certainty of death: we see it in every thing: we *feel* it: we know it is an awful thing to die; and yet we cannot, or will not, give the thought scarce sufficient influence to make us honest in our dealings with God. Profligates and scoffers laugh at death—drunkards and sensualists forget it—hypocrites give it no practical influence—and a thousand others, who are esteemed respectable believers in the gospel, treat the great subject of preparing for their latter end, as if it were a mere human and comparatively trifling arrangement. One talks of religion when he is sick, and expects to die; but gives up his preparations so soon as he recovers, for fear they will interfere with other pursuits: another, who has neglected religion all his days, imagines some trifling impression from a dream, or nervous

affection, makes all safe when he is supposed to be dying; but gives up even this, if he happen to be restored, as if anxious to convince the world that he was not too seririous: and another can die with malice in his heart, towards his neighbour, or he puts off a reconcilation to the latest hour, that if he should be spared, he might still retain the privilege of being at enmity.

Now, there is something tremenduously inconsistent in all this: it is treating God as if he could be tricked and mocked with impunity: it is in entire forgetfulness of all his threatnings against delay: it is deceiving ourselves: it is outraging and insulting the terms upon which salvation is offered. Instead of preparing for death, in this way, we are actually making ourselves the mockery of wiser spirits than ourselves: we are just furnishing that full finish of character, which will render our exposure so overwhelming.

But I will not indulge these just accriminations. I remember that these inconsistent sinners are dying sinners—and that is enough to disarm all censure. Oh, it is appointed unto all men once *to die.* What a scene of weeping, and groaning, and desolating bereavements have I witnessed already! what unknown trials may be still

before me ! If I live some few years, I shall probably follow the greater part of this congregation to the grave ! I shall meet my fathers and mothers no more at the table of the Lord ! I shall miss most of those dear youth with whose hopeful conversion God has sweetened the early trials of my pastoral care—I shall hear the dying groans and close the eyes of many of those very sinners, whom I am now attempting, perhaps in vain, to bring to a sense of their condition ! Oh no ; I cannot feel censorious ; I am travelling with them to death and judgment, and I could rather weep ! Amen.

SERMON II.

HEBREWS ix. 28.

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin, unto salvation.

From the view we have lately taken of death and judgment, we inferred our need of a Saviour: we saw a vast difference between the creature's competency and the atonements which seemed to be required for meeting these events. We saw a terror flashing from the one, and a gloom hanging over the other; for which we have not yet, in this discussion, found an adequate relief. Let us see if we cannot now find that relief in what our text declares of the Redeemer.

We feel bound to take this method of expounding our text, from the example which

is before us. As "it is appointed unto all men once to die, (says the passage already considered) but after this the judgment:" "So, (adds the passage now before us) Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

The object then, is to show *how the once offering and future appearance of Christ meet the cases of human want which we have already contemplated*, to wit: the *evils of death, and of a future judgment.* And

I. How the evils of death are provided for.

There is a twofold sense in which the event of death may be considered. In *itself considered*, it is, as we have seen, a great and terrible evil; and as it has been introduced for the punishment, in part, of sin, it is a *penal evil;* that is, it is a judgment, not a chastisement. "Because thou hast done this, (was the tenor of the sentence) thou shalt return unto the ground, whence thou wast taken;" and it has ever been the principal pang in the sufferance of death by sinners, that they deserved death; and were enduring it as a penal evil. Other evils indeed there are in death, and evils which

are not, even from believers, taken away ; but the sense of guilt and its consequences, is the principal evil. This it is that hangs so deep a gloom around the dying bed—moans so dreadful a sound in the ears of the expiring sinner—makes the grave look so dark and awful to him, and gives the destroyer's hand so heavy and strong a pressure upon his bosom : " the *sting* of death is sin ; and the *strength* of sin is the law."

Now, it is very possible, that this part of the evil of death may be taken away. If a method could be devised for clearing man of this penalty for his transgression ; and if the demand from the just tribunal could be cancelled, the infliction might certainly be spared, and man, though still unworthy of the mercy, escape the evil in question. But such a method was devised, as our text suggests, and it has been carried into perfect execution. " Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many :" *So* he was offered—once offered, as if to tell us that the provision was expressly intended for this event, and tallied with it in being like in manner and time. " So he was once offered to bear the sins of many." The word *offered*, without controversy, is used in a sacrificial sense ; and the import of *bearing sin* is clearly determined

by its use in the prophet Isaiah, and by the apostle Peter: "He bare the sins of many;" and "himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree." The whole sense is then, that Christ has suffered the penalty of death in our stead. He has suffered the full penalty. The essential pains of hell—the horrors of eternal death have been endured by him, as a surety; much more then the penal evils of natural death, which is what we are now principally concerned with. Himself bore this: whatever that inconceivable thing death is, Christ endured: whatever it includes of dissolving pains—whatever of surrounding gloom—whatever of present remorse, and horror of conscience—whatever of prospective terror and despair, Christ essentially endured them all; and as he endured them, not for himself, but for others, and as the severest justice cannot exact more than one satisfaction, he successfully took them away. Now suppose the dying believer sees this, and it is of the very nature of faith to see it: he believes fully, that Christ died for him: he believes in his divine and human character, and thus that he was a proper person to die for another: he believes that God is willing and bound by engagement to accept this satisfaction,

and thus discovers clearly, that the penalty is removed for which death was to be endured ; and how should *not* such a view relieve him from its principal evil ? It changes his whole apprehension of death : it takes away his sense of condemnation, (though it leaves him soft and penitent still, as being the most unworthy of sinners ;) for how can he be condemned when Christ was condemned in his stead ? of course, it stills the voice of conscience and remorse—it takes off the sharpness of parting sympathies, anticipating a short interval, till higher and better relations shall be formed : it scatters that heavy gloom which hangs round the grave, for the body is scarce heeded, when we are looking by faith over into the land of spiritual existences ; and it forever removes all fearful and prospective despairing, since salvation for another's sake, and that other such an one as Christ, and the glories of that Christ, seen by faith, as the case now supposes, makes heaven, and the resurrection, and eternity's enjoyments as sure as if they were already inherited. Oh precious and glorious faith, which helps the dying believer to such discoveries ! Oh more precious and more glorious Redeemer, who hast, in so efficient a method, removed the

penalty of death! It has power in effect, to take even the remaining evils of death away. Death is an evil in itself, even to the believer; for it brings many pains and distresses along with it, which are not penal; and which, of course, may still be endured.

Such are the parting agonies of friends and families—bodily pain, and the loss to society, which death occasions. But the view, which we have supposed the believer to take, can overcome even these. The joys of mind can cause him to be insensible to bodily pain: his friends and family are lost in the enjoyment of his Saviour: his cares for the church, for this whole world, are swallowed up and provided for in the blaze of eternal glory, and a higher and nobler confidence in the providence of God.

Thus he is every way triumphant; and triumphant in each point through the provisions of his faith in Christ. What a spectacle! There he lies, a weak, emaciated, and, as the world would think, a gloomy and failing victim, sinking under the tyrranick hand of death. But oh! could you see him as he is: could you measure the workings of his soul, you would see him a glorious being—a triumphant conqueror! He is anticipating an unmeasurably glorious heaven—he

is crushing the greatest monster that ever infested the human race, by the cross of Christ—and the language of his exulting soul is, "O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory!" "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

And thus much of the first case, which the grace of our Redeemer is intended to meet. Do you now see any more clearly, my brethren, that it provides for the evils of natural death? But

II. There is another want to be provided for; "after death is the judgment." We trembled recently, as we tried to anticipate our future trial of character at the day of judgment; let us observe, in the *second place*, the provisions which are made for this.

The language of this part of our text is, that "to those who look for him, he shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation." What it is to look for Christ, we shall have, for the present, to suppose understood, and proceed to speak directly of the consolations of his presence in judgment. "He shall *appear*," *at the moment of death*, to receive the departing spirit, and welcome it to the bar, as a friend rather than a judge, where all trembling with wonder and anxie-

ty, it presents itself before him! *At the end of time*, when the world most needs his presence—when the church is sorely pressed with enemies, and the long tried patience of trembling believers is ready to give up all for lost—he shall *appear*, suddenly, gloriously—revealed in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and for "the restitution of all things" to a groaning creation. And he shall appear *without sin*. This is to be understood, we think, of himself. In Christ's first appearance, he was made sin for us: though in reality *he knew no sin;* yet for our sakes he became as a sinner, and endured poverty, shame, want, grief and pain, to the utmost: he was in a state of extreme humiliation. In his second appearance it will not be so. His work of suffering is finished; he will appear triumphant as a king—a Redeemer, *without sin*, or one of the effects or appearances of sin upon him; and the exhibition will be most striking by this amazing contrast.

Nothing more forcibly arrests our attention, than a distinguished change of appearance. How should we be surprised to see a king coming out from among a company of gally slaves, and throwing aside his fetters and filthy garments, to assert all the

glories of regality! But thus will Christ appear. The persecuted sufferer will be seen in robes of immaculate dignity, and prove that it was only in the place of others that he consented to wear those despised appearances for a season. He of whom it was sometimes doubted, whether he should be regarded as a devil or the chief of malefactors, will vindicate spotless and eternal innocency—he who lay guarded in a grave, to the very verge of corruption, will appear the King of immortality, sitting on a throne, and judging the living and the dead! What a contrast! he will appear *without sin*, in a state of perfect exaltation.

And this will be "*unto salvation.*" The great object of this appearance will be the salvation of his saints. He seems now to be qualified for it, and of course he will do, on that occasion, whatever is desirable to have effected in order to this great work. What shall it be?

1. It enters into salvation, that the saint be *publickly justified;* and Christ shall do this for him. He shall appear that advocate, which we saw, in view of this great day, to be so indispensable. Amidst the terrors of a falling universe—when the extinguished sun has left the heavens dark—

when the earth is burned up and leaves us in suspended air—and when our full known crimes have hushed the wide universe into trembling silence, he shall be seen coming down from the throne itself, to cast the mantle of his interposing mercy around us, and hold us up from despair. He pleads our cause in the eloquence of his own blood : he presents his almighty doings as the ground of our acceptance : he proclaims us justified and welcome, for his eternal mercy's sake, and then covers over the crimson record of our crimes with folds of forgiveness, so massy and enduring, that the keenest spirits in heaven shall see nothing but purity in our characters, forever.

2. It enters into salvation, that there be *a resurrection of the body ;* for the ruinous results of death can never be considered as wholly removed so long as the body lies humbled in the grave ; and there are, I conceive, more exquisite pleasures provided for, in the union of the glorified body and spirit, than the spirit could be capable of alone. Christ shall effect this. One object of his coming is, " to change our vile bodies that he may fashion them like unto his own glorious body."

In virtue of that mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself —he shall summon them "from the deep earth and deeper seas," and they shall all be seen standing perfect before him. There will be, at least, an identifying resemblance between those bodies that were buried and those that are now seen: Oh! then, believers, you shall behold again your departed companions, your parents, your brothers, your sisters, and all your dear kindred, who have died in the Lord; and you shall know, and admire, and love them with immeasurable elevation of dignity and of solace forever. The soul and body of every believer shall re-unite—the pains, the tears, the parting agonies, shall be forgotten—death, cruel spoiler, shall let go his last grasp on his victims: with his own empty grave he shall be cast into hell, and a million happy spirits shout over his ruin—"thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Finally, it enters into perfect salvation, that there should be *an utter destruction of all the church's and Redeemer's enemies;* and this too will be accomplished by Christ, when he comes the second time without sin.

This destruction will indeed be prior, in the order of events, to the resurrection of the dead and the acceptance of the believer, already considered; but it will be superiour in point of magnitude, and is therefore properly placed last,

What is it that the church has been looking and praying for, ever since sin entered and there was a church to suffer and to pray? what is it that the heart of every desponding saint has fastened upon, or looked for in the language of our text, as a prop for hope, when viewing the desolations of death and sin? what is it that the whole creation has been groaning and travelling for in pain until now? what if it be not this consummation—the adoption of our bodies, and the overthrow of all her enemies by Christ? This it is which we intend by the perfecting of salvation: this for which Christ shall come at his second appearing. He shall appear, at the close of time, to overthrow and crush that last and terrible attempt of men and devils, to destroy the church of God: he shall tread the wine press of almighty wrath: he shall drive the wicked to hell with one arm of his omnipotence, and with the other lift up the millions of his shouting saints, to place them at the marriage supper

of the Lamb. Then shall come to pass that which is written, " that the armies of heaven follow him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." There shall they recline on golden couches—feast on the food of angels—soothe their weary souls with songs, and with ten thousand, thousand, holier, happier spirits, ascribe their victories to the Lamb ! This will be salvation : this will complete the work for which Christ will be seen a second time by those that look for his appearance. If we have now been able to see how the second case in man's destiny is provided for by Christ, we are prepared to draw some practical INFERENCES from our subject. And

1. *In what a glorious attitude does it present the person and character of our Redeemer.* It presents him as *the conqueror of death and the sinner's friend in judgment !*

The world has long been supposed to be infested with monsters, and those imaginary heroes, who destroyed them, were deemed the benefactors of mankind. But death, my friends, is the worst of monsters—the effects of his power, at least, are real ; and we have seen all human good withering and fainting before it for ages. How then shall we sufficiently rejoice in a Saviour, who has

conquered death! We have seen the fact, and we have seen the explanation of the fact—*how* it is that an all-powerful Redeemer takes away the curse of death—deprives the monster of his sting—lifts off his heavy hand from the dying bosom—scatters the gloom of the grave—raises us above human sympathies and human pain, and opens a vista into eternal worlds—beaming blessedness into the soul, even on this side the grave. Already death is conquered by Christ; but this is not all: he attends the departing spirit in her untried flight—he appears her friend in judgment—he announces her justification—he raises her humbled dust—he destroys her enemies, and elevates her to the marriage supper of the Lamb! Is not Christ *the all sufficient!* is he not *glorious!*

"Our Lord is risen from the dead,
Our Jesus has gone up on high;
The powers of hell are captive led,
Dragg'd to the portals of the sky.

There his triumphal chariot waits,
And angels chant the solemn lay:
"Lift up your heads, ye heav'nly gates,
"Ye everlasting doors give way!"

Loose all your massy bars of light,
And wide unfold the radiant scene;

He claims those mansions as his right,
Receive the King of glory in.

"Who is the King of glory, who?"
The Lord that all his foes o'ercame,
The world, sin, death, and hell o'erthrew;
And Jesus is the conqueror's name."

2. *What abundant consolation is offered by such a view of Christ, to the afflicted and disconsolate!* Surely death presents the greatest of trials which pertain to our earthly nature; and if Christ can overcome these, we may reason with safety, that he will not fail us in any other. How often have we seemed to hear him say to his dying children, "fear not to go down in to the grave; for I will be with thee, I will uphold thee; yea, I will comfort thee, and bring thee up thence, saith the Lord thy Redeemer!" Will he be less kind to the *living!* As their wants are, shall not his loving kindness be? The conqueror of death—the friend in judgment—oh! surely he will never, never forsake thee; and according to the nature and necessities of thy trials, a portion shall be provided. In all your ways, honour him, therefore, and "trust in him at all times; pour out your hearts before him; God is a refuge for us." "He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea in seven, there shall no evil come near thee." "Trust and fear

him in the days of your youth, and he will not cast you off in old age, neither forsake you when your strength faileth." Trust Christ, if you tremble and fear, on account of having neglected his grace so long, and you shall find he is able to save to the uttermost, even of your case : trust Christ, if doubts and fears assail you, lest you never knew the grace of God : trust him if you fear you are soon to die, and are not assured of your preparation : trust Christ if you have long mourned for conscious sin, and never felt the sweets of forgiving love : seek and trust Christ ; for he has " once offered himself to bear the sins of many ; and to them that look for him, he shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation." Faith, however, we have seen to be indispensable, in apprehending these comforts ; and we feel bound, therefore, in conclusion, to draw one more inference, that the word spoken may administer a portion to all.

3. The subject teaches us *who those are*, or whom Christ offered himself, and for whom he shall appear. They are those who look for him ; (i. e.) those who having *looked to him* for salvation already, according to the evangelical invitation, are then looking with expectation and delight for

his second appearance. They are the *many* for whom he offered himself, in opposition to the *all* who must die once and go to judgment.

There was a sense in which Christ offered himself for some, that he did not for others; and that distinction is made manifest to us, when some, or many, believe on him, while others regard him not. Here then is the practical distinction, and the condition for the consolations of our text. He will appear without sin unto salvation unto them who believe on him, or look for his coming. How anxious ought we to be then, until we exhibit that evidence! how sedulously should we strive to look for Christ!

One thing is certain, by universal consent: We are all dying: we do feel the pressure of affliction: we do, therefore, come within the condition, as to wants, which led the apostle to announce the provisions of our text. Now let us be entreated to settle, at least, one question. Is the revelation of Jesus Christ true or not? and because, if not, I wish to know what other hope there is for fallen man! Death and sorrow are evils, painful, pressing evils—we cannot avoid them—they crowd around us, and what shall we do!

what ray of light shall break the horrid shade ! how shall we know, how shall we endure to take the fearful leap into a future existence, if we do not find our direction in the gospel ! Is it not worth examining then, whether it be true ? It is, you will allow. possible that religion may be a reality, and if it be, 'tis worth a whole life of research—'tis worthy of the most deep and patient examination, until you determine the point.

No man ought to rest—no man, whatever his case or condition be, can consistently rest, until he is satisfied whether religion be true, and whether he possess it. How dare he rest ; 'tis certainly this or nothing. Without Christ, we walk on the verge of a dark and bottomless gulf, where thousands are plunging every day—some from our very households and bed-chambers, who never return, and who are gone, spite of all our tears and wailings, we know not whither ! Is it not worth inquiry, at least, whether to such a gulf there is a bottom or shore ? or whether there be a friend to conduct us through it ? Can we at times forbear to make this inquiry ; and if we do, how can we rest till we are satisfied ?

Now may the Lord add his blessing to all our feeble attempts to impress the truths of his word; and to his name shall be the glory through Christ. Amen.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

The writer of the preceding lectures having been prevented by severe sickness from attending to the greater part of the printing, the following typographical errors, among some others of minor consequence, have occurred :

In page 160, 7th line from top, for *presents* read *prevents.*
163, 11th from bottom, for *soon* read *sure.*
165, 1st at top, for *fullness* read *freshness.*
177, 14th from bottom, *who* is superfluous.
202, 8th from bottom, for *something* read *same thing.*
209, last line at bottom, for *an* read *on.*
213, 7th from bottom, after *only* insert *He.*
221, 4th from top, for *comment* read *commencement.*
223, 2d from top, for *perserving* read *persevering.*
235, 5th from top, for *arose* read *arise.*
267, 14th from top, for *facts* read *acts.*
282, 9th from top, for *as* read *for.*
300, 9th from bottom, for *even* read *ever.*

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